International Symposium on

The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-Being of Humanity



The 9th International Buddhist Conference
on the United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations
31 May - 2 June 2555/2012
Thailand

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Preface

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), of which I have the honor of serving as its rector, has been privileged again to witness and play a crucial role in developing and hosting multiple United Nations Day of Vesak celebrations and academic conference for many years, between 2004-2007, and from 2009-2012. For in 2012, the ICDV has returned to our campus – bringing the international Buddhist world closer than before. We are all very grateful to the Royal Thai Government for its constant support, and thank the Thai Supreme Sangha Council for its blessings, guidance and support.

We are grateful to the United Nations for recognizing our thrice-sacred Buddhist holy-day. It has been 2555 years since the death of our Great Teacher, and we have gathered here from across the globe, from many nations, to again celebrate the United Nations Day of Vesak and Buddhajayanti: The Celebration of 2600 Years of the Buddha's Enlightenment**.**

For the celebrations this year, the International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU), created from the collective efforts of Buddhists everywhere, plays an important role, yet again. The IABU was born from sustained collaborations between international Buddhist leaders and scholars, beginning to meet together under the auspices of the International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV) celebrations, but has branched out to as the IABU Secretariat largely organizes the logistics and academic portions of the conference. The IABU now aims to take the lead with improving Buddhist Studies and higher education for Buddhists in general.

This publication could not have been possible without the persistence, hard work, and dedication of MCU's scholars and staff. I wish to thank all members of the International Council for Day of Vesak and the Executive Council of the International Association of Buddhist Universities, and the Editorial Committee for their devotion. I am also grateful to our additional donors, sponsors and volunteers with the conference. We have done our best to bring you the ideals of the Buddhist world.

(The Most Venerable Prof. Dr. Phra Dharmakosajarn)
Rector, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
President, International Association of Buddhist Universities
President, International Council for Day of Vesak

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9th International Conference and Celebration of United Nations Day of Vesak

Theme: The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-being of Humanity

Venue: MCU Campus Wang Noi, UN Convention Center Bangkok and Buddhamonthon

Program: 31 May – 2 June 2012

Wednesday, 30 May 2012		
All Day		Arrival of participants at Airport Reception, Registration at the Hotel Lobby
19:00 hours		Dinner at the Hotel
Thursday, 31 May 2012 - MCU Conference Hall, Ayutthaya		
08:00 hours		Arrival of participants at MCU Conference Hall
08:30 hours		Buddhist leaders enter the Conference Hall
09:00 – 09:30 hours		• Arrival of His Holiness Somdet Phra Buddhachaya • His Holiness is attended and escorted by the Organizing Committee • His Holiness leads the congregation in Paying Homage to the Triple Gem • Report by Most Ven. Prof. Dr. Phra Dharmakosajarn, Rector of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and Member of the Supreme Sangha Council • Speech by His Holiness • His Holiness departs
09:30 – 10:00 hours		Welcome Address by Most Ven. Prof. Dr. Phra Dharmakosajarn, Rector of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and President of the International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV**)**
11:00 hours		Arrival of HRH Princess Chulabhorn Walailak Akra Rajakumari • HRH Princess Chulabhorn is attended and escorted by Hon. Deputy Prime Minister Yongyut Wichaidit and organizing Committee • HRH Princess Chulabhorn pays Homage to the Triple Gem • Report by Hon. Deputy Prime Minister Yongyut Wichaidit • Inauguration speech by HRH Princess Chulabhorn • HRH Princess Chulabhorn departs
13:00 hours		• Speech by Hon. Deputy Prime Minister Yongyut Wichaidit
14.00-14.45 hours		• Messages from Supreme Patriarch and Buddhist Leaders from different traditions
14:45 – 15:30 hours		• Keynote Speech on The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-being of Humanity**: Ven.** Phra Bhavanaviteht, UK

15:30 – 17:00 hours		Symposium Session 1: Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation 1. Rev. Noriaki Kunitomo, Japan 2. Prof. Vanchai Vatanasapt, M.D.,ONZM, Thailand 3. Prof. Kamaleswar Bhattacharya, France 4. Dr. Phil Tan, USA
17:00 – 17:30 hours		Group Photograph
18:00 hours		Dinner at MCU
19:00 – 21:00 hours		Cultural Performance
Friday, 1 June 2012 - MCU Main Campus		
08:00 hours		Arrival of participants at MCU Conference Hall
08:30 – 08:50 hours		Guest Speaker on Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation: Venerable Dr. Sheng Kai, China
08:50 – 09:10 hours		Guest Speaker on Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation: Dr. Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhaya, Thailand
09:30 – 11:30 hours		Symposium Session 2: Buddhist Wisdom and Environment 1. Prof. Dr. Donald K Swearer, USA 2. Prof. Dr. Damien Keown, UK 3. Ven. Dr. Thich Tam-Duc, Vietnam 4. Prof. Dr. Chamnong Adivadhanasit, Thailand
11:30 hours		Luncheon
13:00 – 15:00 hours		Speeches / Messages from Buddhist Leaders
15:00 – 17:00 hours		Symposium Session 3: Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation 1. Ven. Prof. Dr. Yuan Ci, China 2. Senior Prof. Sumanapala Galmangoda, Sri Lanka 3. Ven. Dr. Khammai, UK 4. Dr. Sarah Shaw, UK
18:00 hours		Dinner at Hotel

Saturday, 2 June 2012 - UNCC / Buddhamonthon		
08:00 hours	All	Arrival of Participants at UNCC, Bangkok
08:30 hours		Arrival of Her Excellency Prime Minister of Thailand and H.E. The President of Sri Lanka
09:00 hours		• Welcome Speech by the Secretary-General of the UN ESCAP Ms. Noeleen Heyzer • Message from H.E. Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary-General • Message from H.E. Irina Bokova, Director-General, UNESCO • Address from H.E. Prime Minister of Thailand • Address from H.E. The President of Sri Lanka
10:00 hours		Congratulatory Messages from Buddhist and Political Leaders
11:30 hours		Luncheon
12:30 hours		Group Photo
13:30 – 14:00 hours		Congratulatory Messages from Buddhist and Political Leaders
14:00 – 15:00 hours		Final Plenary Session – Recommendations from the Symposiums and Workshop
15::00 hours		• Announcing of the 2012 Bangkok Declaration followed by chanting for world peace • Closing ceremony presided over by His Holiness Somdet Phra Buddhachaya
16:00 hours		Proceed to Buddhamonthon for Candle-lit Procession in Srisakyadasapalanyana Buddha Statute's compound, Buddhamonthon, Nakhornpathom
17:00- hours		• Chanting in honor of HMQ and HRH The Crown Prince • Candle-lit procession • Foundation Laying Stone • Cultural Performance • Dinner at Hotel
Sunday, 3 June 2012		
13:00-15:00 hours		Joint EXCO Meeting of ICDV/IABU EXCO at Wat Prayunrawongsawas, Bangkok
All Day		All participants check-out from hotel and depart

Keynote Speech on

The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-being of Humanity

Venerable Phra Bhavanaviteht

The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-Being of Humanity.

Venerable Phra Bhavanaviteht, UK

May I say what a privilege it is to be addressing such a vast and august company of fellow Buddhists at this the celebration to mark the 2,600th anniversary of the Buddha's Enlightenment, surely the most important and significant event in the history of humankind. And what a worthy response this gigantic gathering is to the Buddha's advice to meet often and in large numbers as a means to ensure our prosperity and prevent decline. It is my pleasure to introduce the theme of our gathering, "The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-Being of Humanity", that will be occupying our hearts and minds particularly over the three days we are spending together.

Traditionally Vesak or Vesakha Puja celebrates the Birth, the Enlightenment and the Passing of the Buddha and in Theravada countries especially it is these three great events that we remember at this time. The Theravada despite its antiquity is now of course one of many for, since its beginning, Buddhism has grown into a large and diverse family that embraces a host of separate but related movements, movements that are differentiated not only by the nature of the various lands and cultures in which they have taken root and grown but as well by their traditions and rituals, and even by their particular doctrines and interpretations of doctrine and discipline. But for all that is different and that separates us there is much that binds us and there is one thing in particular that unites us, our common origin, the Buddha's Enlightenment. All that we have now that is described as Buddhist and

all that is known as Buddhism has come from that unique and amazing experience, an experience that transformed a former prince who had become an ascetic wanderer to such a degree that from that day to this he has been known as the Buddha, the One Who Knows, the Fully Enlightened One. Had that Enlightenment not taken place there would have been no Buddha and no Buddhism and this great gathering would not be happening; without the Buddha's Enlightenment this great family would never have taken birth and most especially, had the Enlightenment not taken place and there'd been no Buddha and no Dhamma, we would be living a life without hope and without a way out of our suffering.

I've been reading again lately how until about two to three hundred years ago the early Buddhist history of India had been lost and forgotten, then, thanks mostly to colonial administrators, educated and cultivated men who were also amateur archaeologists and orientalists, India's glorious Buddhist past was gradually uncovered. Living as we do now in an age when facts can so easily be looked up and information disseminated quickly, easily and accurately it is hard to imagine a time when little was known of the history of the world and the history of humankind. In fact it's only fairly recently that we've been able to explore and investigate our past and develop a sophisticated scholarship and reliable body of literature backed up with archaeological discoveries that practically every day reveal more about our history and the origins of our species. Even as more details emerge about the great changes that have swept our planet and affected humanity over the centuries, the marvellous civilisations and empires that have risen and fallen, the material, medical and technological advances that have taken place, the languages, philosophies, customs, works of art, drama, music and ideas that the human mind has spawned, one cannot help but be struck by the fact that just as it's always been, so we continue to lead precarious lives dependent on conditions over which we can have little or no influence, dependent too on inner attitudes and mental states that we don't understand and which we can't control. What is it that human beings have done repeatedly from as far back as we can see? From that day to this, whatever love, kindness, compassion, generosity and loyalty they might have felt and expressed, people have still fought each other, they have sought to take from each other, to prey on each other, to fear and abuse each other and in short they have treated each other with terrible inhumanity, not to speak of how they've treated other living creatures. And still it goes on: in this very day there are still wars being waged, terrified human beings languishing in torture chambers and animals being abused and grossly maltreated. And why? Because of perverted minds, minds infected by greed and hatred, corrupted by ignorance. The history of mankind is a history of discontent. And still, despite all the advances and improvements to our material well-being people generally are still not happy and remain burdened by gain and loss, happiness and suffering, praise and blame, sickness and health. Despite all the changes and improvements, life is still difficult, for many purposeless and for most disappointing. So much has changed and so little has changed: life is suffering.

One particular characteristic of Buddhism that I think never fails to impress those of us who have been used to the dogmas of other religions, and especially, speaking personally, those of us brought up in Europe and the West, is the invitation to see for ourselves and to question the principles and indeed practically everything that Buddhism teaches. There are many advantages to such an attitude, not least of which is the willingness on the part of Buddhism to explain itself and answer its many critics, some of whom just cannot understand a religion that rejects the notion of a Creator God, others who cannot see the point in what they might perceive as a selfish and inward-looking approach to life, yet others who have no idea what we mean by suffering and still others who are

not yet ready to take responsibility for their own lives. And these days the young, the humanists and the materialists are all questioning the need for religion of any kind at all. So I welcome this opportunity for us to clarify for ourselves and for our critics and indeed for the world at large the benefits that the Buddha's Enlightenment has brought us and the rewards of living and practising as sincere Buddhists. We Buddhists are not proselytisers and I have no wish to support or encourage religious coercion but still we do have a responsibility to make Buddhism known and when we look around and see so much violence, poverty and hardship, so much suffering, I'm sure that with one voice we would all want to proclaim that the world desperately needs Buddhism.

Before we go on to examine the nature of the Buddha's Enlightenment and its benefit for humanity let us just pause to remind ourselves of how it came about. Amongst Buddhists in the West much is made of the fact that the Buddha was born a man, a human being just like the rest of us. Never mind that the circumstances of his birth might have been rather different from our own or that one might or might not accept the stories of his long preparation over many lifetimes, he was a man, a human being, who like us was subject to all the aches and pains of ordinary life, who could no more stop himself ageing than the rest of us, who could become ill just as we can and whose life, just like ours, would one day end in death. But it wasn't until the young Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, the Buddha to be, realised this of himself and of all those and indeed everything surrounded him, that he then decided to renounce the world and try to find a way out of the unsatisfactory and painful predicament in which he found himself. That search came to a head six years later when we find him after years of hardship and rough living, emaciated and weather-beaten, seated under a great tree beside the River Neranjara. Had we been living then and passing by we might not have taken much notice - holy men then as now were not uncommon in India and we would never have imagined that what was about to take place there under that tree would be one of the most extraordinary and meaningful events in the history of humankind. Had we crept closer we might have overheard him intoning to himself his firm determination not to rise from that seat, 'though skin sinews and bones wither away, though flesh and blood of my body dry up' until he had attained whatever was attainable by manly perseverance, energy and endeavour. And so the stage was set for the Enlightenment. It was the night of the Full Moon of the month of Vesakha. As the Bodhisatta sat, alone and resolute, through the three watches of the night successive realisations unfolded in his mind until by the time the dawn broke it was all over, his full and perfect Enlightenment was complete and he was the Buddha.

He had begun his sitting as a man, a human being, with a mind not unlike ours, a mind that knew greed, hatred, delusion and he had arisen from that seat no longer, as he explained later, a human being, but a Buddha, a mind transformed, a mind utterly cleansed, a mind far distant from these defilements of lust, hatred and delusion. Now, you might well say, "That's great, that's all very well, I mean he obviously has benefited and he must now feel a great relief but what about anyone else?" And the scriptures tell us he did feel extraordinarily blissful and peaceful and he couldn't bring himself to do anything but sit close to that tree, that base where he had sat and attained his Enlightenment. In the weeks that followed he moved to various places nearby but always within sight of that tree. And during that time he reflected on what he had understood, what he had learnt while he had sat there. For a while it began to look as though that was going to be it. He seemed to have no inclination to talk to anyone, to teach anyone, to express his new found understanding at all because he felt that what he had learnt, what he had understood was so difficult to attain that it was unlikely anyone really would have the patience and perseverance to follow him. Then Brahma

Sahampati, concerned that the benefits of the Buddha's Enlightenment to humanity might be lost, decided to intervene and so he managed to put into the mind of the Buddha that there would be those with but little dust on their eyes who would understand and that human beings are like lotuses in a pond, at varying stages of development, some still in the darkness and mud of ignorance but others already rising to the surface, and some about to break through and blossom. Reflecting on this the Buddha decided that he would, after all, teach. And we know now that he taught for a very long time and that many people benefited by that. We have a great body of teaching and instruction that has come down to us from those days. But, just think, if he hadn't taught at all, would there have been any benefit in his enlightenment other than for himself?

Clearly there was a benefit to him because we all know that greed, hatred and delusion are painful. If we are greedy, if we are possessed by greed, if for example we go shopping and see something we like, then inevitably what follows that liking is desire, we want it, we must have it. People become intoxicated with that desire, they must have that thing, that handbag, that pair of shoes or whatever it is, and if they can't have it or just as they are about to buy it someone else buys it, pain! Then if they get it, the next thing that enters their minds is attachment, which means that if they lose it or it breaks, pain again! This is really trivial stuff but still, people suffer; and this is not to speak of the big things that people desire, the big things that people and even whole nations claim as theirs, and the pain when they lose them or their loved ones to whom they are so deeply attached. Now why is there pain? Because of desire and attachment. It's perfectly normal, it's just how people are. This is the dukkha, the suffering that the Buddha was continually pointing at. So when you can free yourself from greed and attachment, when you can clear out your aversion, it must be wonderful to look upon things with complete and utter equanimity, to be undisturbed by anything, mindful of everything. It has to be wonderful. So there is this obvious benefit for the individual. But then, what about other people?

Well, we all know, don't we, how we can be affected by people we meet. If you bump into someone who is very angry, you are on your guard; if you meet someone who is very severe and appears to have a lot of aversion, you are very careful, you might be quite afraid. If you are faced with someone who is smiling, and warm, you are attracted, you want to be with that person. If you meet someone with whom you feel there is no threat, then you are at ease, you trust them, you have no concerns at all about them. So, obviously, we are affected by the way people are and the way we are affects other people. Which means we ought to be aware and careful how we affect others. We know from the scriptures that people were both affected and deeply impressed by the Buddha. One extraordinary example is that of Angulimala, the killer who became an Arahant. I love this story very much. You will have read or heard that in England I head the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy, an organisation that is devoted to making Buddhism available in the prisons of the United Kingdom. When we founded it 27 years ago we decided to call it after Angulimala: Angulimala, the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy Organisation. At first I wasn't sure that it was a good idea to call it Angulimala. I thought people would find that word, that name, a bit too difficult but to my surprise that hasn't been the case and now Angulimala is well known in our prisons. Whenever I have the opportunity I tell that story, because it's an important story. I tell it to prisoners - it gives them hope. I tell it to staff - it gives them some understanding of the people they are dealing with and reminds them that even people who have behaved badly, who have harmed others and offended against society can change. Now we have no one in our prisons who has killed as many people as Angulimala. But nevertheless we do have in our prisons some very dangerous people and people who have done terrible

things and are having to live with the consequences of awful crimes that they have committed. The Angulimala story focuses on the meeting between Angulimala, probably the world's first great serial killer, and the Buddha. You all know the story. Angulimala was set on obtaining a thousand right hand human little fingers and the day when he had nine hundred and ninety nine on a cord round his neck the Buddha walks into his forest. So he quickly arms himself and dashes out to murder the Buddha and take the last finger. But then he finds that however fast he runs he can't catch the Buddha who, quite unconcerned, alone and unarmed, is quietly walking through his forest. Finally, he calls out to him to stop. And without the slightest sign of fear or aversion, the Buddha turns to him and says, "I have stopped, now it's your turn." Now that meeting was cataclysmic. You have on the one side a man full of rage and hate, intent on taking life at all costs, a powerful, athletic figure; and on the other you have the Buddha, unarmed, alone, in this very remote place, facing an extremely dangerous man. And what happened? The Buddha totally disarmed Angulimala. And how and why? Because the Buddha stood there with no sense of self or ego, with no hatred whatsoever, with no aversion and no fear. Angulimala was staggered by this. He had never in all his life met someone like this. He was used to people being terrified of him. He was used to them hating him. He could cope with that, he knew how to deal with that: pull out the sword, kill 'em! But here he was faced with someone who was unmoved by him, who didn't hate him, not at all, not even a little bit; someone who was able to smile at him, who had no fear of him. What could he do? He was totally disarmed, totally taken aback, dazzled by the Buddha's metta, his loving-kindness. The weapons fell from his hands. He was helpless in the presence of this extraordinary person. And we know how the story unfolded: how he ended up going back with the Buddha to the monastery and spending the rest of his life there, and in time becoming one of the Arahants. So, without giving any formal teaching at all, with hardly a word spoken, the presence of the Buddha could bring out the best in people, it could change people for the better. There was an obvious benefit to the world and to humanity. His presence and conduct, the result of his Enlightenment, were an inspiration that brought peace and happiness wherever he went.

An important lesson we learn from this is that when you live the Dhamma you benefit not only yourself but just about everyone you come into contact with. If we aspire to making the world a better place then first of all we have to make our world a better place. We have to begin right here with our own hearts and minds. And how do we do this? Like a lot of youngsters I was brought up to be kind, to love my neighbour and generally to be a good little boy and I could see that it was better to be good than bad but I couldn't always see how to be good, particularly if I was angry, or jealous, or overcome by any of those horrible emotions or attitudes. This is a critical point: you can't just tell someone to be good, you've got to be able to tell them how. Fortunately, right from the beginning, in his very first sermon when he explained the Four Noble Truths, the Buddha has told us how. The means, the way he offers us is the Noble Eightfold Path, a path of morality, meditation and wisdom. The very same path he had discovered and travelled himself, so he knew it well. Didn't he once liken himself to a traveller who had found the way to a wonderful city that had been lost and then having found that path, thereafter the way to that city was then open and available to any who might want to take it and go there. The Buddha's Dhamma - the way to Nibbana, the way out of suffering, is there, open and available. The Buddha has shown the way and if we want to we too can now go that way, out of our suffering and all the way to Nibbana. This is what the Buddha taught and of course he expanded and adapted what he had to say to suit all classes and all sorts of people: monks and nuns, householders, business people, the rich and the poor, from kings to road sweepers. His advice was wide-ranging, teaching people how to live peacefully and manage their

lives, how to relate to each other harmoniously, how to respect parents, teachers, employers and religious leaders, how to understand their duties and responsibilities to these as well as their own spouse, children, servants and employees. The society that he advocated was a harmless one: one in which no one hurt another or themselves and a society that was then no threat to any other. The foundation of such a harmless society is of course morality, expressed basically and principally as precepts: the detailed and complex Vinaya for the Sangha and the simpler but equally profound Five Precepts for the laity, five great gifts, as the Buddha praised them, of security that individuals give themselves and that they then give to others. From there, established on a firm moral foundation, we have the techniques of concentration and awareness that can take the mind on a great voyage of discovery that bring the practitioner to a personal and direct realisation of the true nature of things and with that the ending of craving and the stopping of suffering. This is no mere faith-based belief system but a practical way of training and method of dealing with one's defilements and ignorance, something each of us can work on and do for ourselves.

Speaking earlier as I did of an ideal society, a special association of people, we must now come to the Sangha, a most important institution that the Buddha established and the third of the Three Jewels. A monastic institution, the first of its kind in the world, that not only offers the opportunity to live a disciplined life and practise the Buddha's way out of suffering intensively and full-time but which for 2,600 years has cared for, taught and preserved the Buddha's legacy. This has been no mean feat. We should not underestimate for one minute the value and importance of that contribution. Already in the West where, apart from the Asian communities, the spread of Buddhism has been largely lay led, we are beginning to see a fragmentation and dilution of the Buddha's message. Amongst some groups of Western Buddhists it's not uncommon to feel the Sangha, or the monastic Sangha as it's sometimes cast, marginalised and dismissed as an outmoded, hierarchical, and authoritarian body that doesn't matter any more. The effect when that respect for traditional guidance and leadership is undermined is for views and opinions that are not Dhamma to proliferate as if they were Dhamma and when that happens and with a weakened Sangha the prospects for the Buddha-Dhamma's continuing survival are poor. I am reminded of the late great Ajahn Chah (Phra Bodhinyanathera) once saying to us that we must be prepared to bend ourselves to the Dhamma and not try to bend the Dhamma to suit ourselves. In reality the Sangha is a tremendous storehouse of wisdom and experience and at its best it offers teaching and guidance and opportunities for training like nothing else. Yes we know most Sangha members are not yet perfect, we know there are bad apples, we know that not everyone who joins succeeds or even lasts very long but that doesn't mean that the Sangha is all washed up any more than the presence of a few delinquent students means that a great university is useless. The Sangha is a great field of merit and support for the preservation of the well-being of humanity that radiates from the Buddha's Enlightenment. And let us remember too that the presence of a Buddhist temple and the example and leadership of the Sangha still make a huge difference to the quality of life and prosperity in many a village and community throughout the Buddhist world.

Now having said something about each of the Three Jewels or Refuges and the direct benefit of the Buddha's Enlightenment and what has sprung from it for humanity, I'd like to move on to some of the indirect or concealed benefits of the Buddha's Enlightenment.

Although in the past travel was a very difficult and dangerous enterprise, many adventurers nevertheless left their homes and villages to risk life and limb in pursuit of their dreams, in hope finding of unimaginable treasure, or of winning land and territory, or simply to trade or even just

to satisfy their curiosity. People have always been moving. We know about some of the riches and material gains they brought back, even about some of the plants and drugs and the people they enslaved and brought home with them. What we don't know much about are the ideas and philosophies they encountered, how well they might have understood them and how much of these rubbed off on them and came back with them to influence their own civilisations. But it must have happened. We know how Buddhism spread and developed throughout Asia but in ancient times did it ever reach Europe? Well, through the Greek presence in India following Alexander the Great's invasion it's almost certain that Buddhist ideas found their way back to influence the ancient Greek philosophers. And it's possible that Buddhism might have influenced the rise and spread of Christianity. It's pure speculation but it's just possible that in those missing years between the ages of twelve and thirty when there's no record of where he was or what he was doing that Christ might just have been in India sitting at the feet of Buddhist masters. We will probably never know but there it is, there are sayings and stories of Christ that suggest a Buddhist influence. Certainly it's been observed that the origins of early Christian monasticism were strongly influenced by the Jewish Therapeutae who lived an austere life in forest hermitages and practised meditation just like the Theravadan Buddhist monks who they seem to have modelled themselves on. In our own time when travel is so much more comfortable, quick and cheap many people are taking their holidays far from home and many are coming to the beaches and islands of Thailand where they encounter Buddhism and are often impressed by the aura of peace and harmony that emanates from it. And then there are the pacifist and patient examples of Buddhist leaders in exile and under arrest that the media reminds us of again and again. Even on the walls of a high security prison that I visit I see pasted the images and inspirational words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Aung San Suu Kyi. And lately in the West the medical profession has discovered the benefits of mindfulness. Mindfulness techniques are being used to help patients deal with persistent pain and with mental problems like depression. In fact mindfulness has become big business with several universities and a number of individuals teaching mindfulness and teaching people to be teachers of mindfulness. A few weeks ago a famous comedian and actor was giving evidence to a Parliamentary Committee set up to inquire into policies on drugs and drug addiction. In his evidence this actor advocated an "abstinence-based recovery" approach, telling MPs this was how he overcame his addiction to drugs. "Abstinence-based recovery" - doesn't that sound remarkably like what the Buddha taught? Isn't that just what the Five Precepts are? And so all sorts of people in different ways are discovering the benefits of Buddhist teaching and practice. It's well known that in former times the great Emperor Asoka of India after his conversion to Buddhism set up the world's first welfare state and offered protection to all faiths. Buddhist monarchies since, like here in Thailand, have tended to follow that example and promote tolerance and understanding between religions. And it almost begins to look as though this has begun to rub off on our British royal family. The King or Queen of England is known as the Defender of the Faith, meaning Christianity, and he or she is also the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. First, it was Prince Charles who a few years ago made it known that when he inherits the throne he would like to be the Defender of Faith, meaning all faiths and then it was Her Majesty the Queen who this year at the beginning of her Diamond Jubilee celebrations surprised us all by saying in a speech at Lambeth Palace, the home of the Archbishop of Canterbury, that the Church "has a duty to protect the free practice of all faiths in this country." Whether or not these pronouncements owe anything to Asoka I don't know but it's just possible they are also examples of the unusual and indirect benefits to humanity of the Buddha's Enlightenment.

As I mentioned at the beginning of my address, when speaking of the conditions that are conducive to welfare and that prevent decline the Buddha praised meeting frequently and in large numbers. The number meeting here today is almost certainly far greater than any he had in mind at the time and while once a year might not be thought of as frequent, when we consider how many have come here and from how many countries and how many hundreds and thousands of miles have been travelled to be here it is practically inconceivable that a meeting like this could be organised any more frequently than once a year. So, thanks to the organisers, the volunteers and all those who have made this grand meeting possible, one of those conditions of welfare and prosperity has been met. But there are others, and another that we can all contribute to and which I trust we will all observe is to conduct our business in harmony and at the end of our stay to go our separate ways in harmony. And furthermore I hope we will go our separate ways inspired by what we have heard and experienced, determined and energised to practise with even greater commitment what the Buddha taught: for that I am sure is the most certain, if not the only way of ensuring that the Buddha's Enlightenment continues to exert its influence for the well-being of humanity for generations to come.

Thank you.

Guest Speakers on

Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation

Venerable Dr. Sheng Kai, China

Dr. Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya

Buddhism Has Changed Chinese Spiritual World

Venerable Sheng Kai, China

Buddhism has created a brilliant historical culture in China in the past twenty centuries which leave a great impact on every aspect of Chinese people's thought. We may say that it has changed Chinese spiritual world entirely.

Buddhism has been introduced into China at the time of Han Dynasty, since when it has a prominent effect on Chinese culture. I would like to interpret how Buddhism influences Chinese spiritual world in the dimension of philosophy, morality, arts and social life.

I Buddhism Changing Chinese Philosophy

Firstly, I would like to start from the philosophical level. During the span of Sui and Tang Dynasties from the end of the 6th century to the middle of 9th century, Chinese Buddhism saw a period of florescence. During this time, new developments took place in doctrine and theory, various schools emerged one after another, that is, the Sanlun school, the Dharma-character school, the TianTai school, the Xian Shou School, the Chan school, the Pure Land school, the Disciplinary school, and the Esoteric School. Those schools were based on different sutras and upheld distinctive theories. The flourish of Buddhism, of course, is related to a highly developed level of culture at that time, and also reflects the enthusiasm of Chinese people toward Buddhism. Many

creations were made by Chinese monks during this time. Take the following famous Buddhist Chant as an example, "Originally there was no Bodhi-tree; Nor was there any mirror; Since originally there was nothing, Whereon can the dust fall?" [1]This poem reveals the superb perception and creativity of the Chinese people, also indicates the Chinese spirit of self-reliance. Generally speaking, after a thousand years' assimilation and digesting, Buddhism made a creative development in China in the Tang dynasty. Since then, Buddhism became one of the inexhaustible wisdom sources for Chinese culture, together with Taoism and Confucianism.

After Tang Dynasty, many thinkers absorbed nutrients from Buddhism when they are building their own philosophical systems. For example, it is commonly acknowledged in philosophical circles that the Neo-Confucianism of Song and Ming Dynasties was obviously generated, to a great extent, by the impetus and impact of Buddhism, especially the doctrine of Chan School. In the late Qing Dynasty, young people in Chinese intellectuals, such as Tan Sitong（谭嗣同）, Kang Youwei（康有为）, Liang Qichao（梁启超） and so on, borrowed many valuable ideas from Buddhism in order to push forward democratic movements. Buddhist theories of love and compassion, equality, impermanence and egolessness inspired and encouraged the intellectuals at that time.

Not only did Chinese Buddhism be considered as the continuance of Indian Buddhism, but also accepted as a creation combining Chinese traditional culture and Indian Buddhism. Here I would like to introduce Chan School specially. Chan Buddhism emphasizes the personal expression of experiential wisdom in the attainment of enlightenment. Chan teachings can be likened to "the finger pointing at the moon", which denies the value of words and claims that people can gain enlightenment without studying Buddhist scripture. There is an interesting story here. It is said that Ma-zu（马祖） used to live on the Heng Mountain（衡山）, where he practiced meditation alone in a small hut. One day, Huai-jang（怀让） began to grind some bricks in front of Ma-zu（马祖）'s hut. When Ma-zu（马祖） saw it, he asked Huai-jang（怀让） what he was doing. He replied that he was planning to make a mirror. Ma-zu（马祖） said: "How can grinding bricks make a mirror? Huai-jang（怀让） said: If grinding bricks cannot make a mirror, how can meditation make a Buddha?" By this saying Ma-zu（马祖） was enlightened. [2]

Thus the Chan sage lives just as everyone else lives, and does what everyone else does. In passing from delusion to Enlightenment, he has left his mortal humanity behind and has entered sage-hood. But after that he still has to leave sage-hood behind and to enter once more into mortal humanity. This is described by the Chan Masters as "rising yet another step over the top of the hundred-foot bamboo." The top of the bamboo symbolizes the climax of the achievement of Enlightenment. "Rising yet another step means that after Enlightenment has come, the sage still has other things to do. What he has to do, however, is no more than the ordinary things of daily life.

Youlan Feng（冯友兰）, a famous Chinese philosopher, used to say, "Thus the best method of spiritual cultivation is to do one's tasks without deliberate effort or purposeful mind. To do things without deliberate effort and purposeful mind is to do things naturally and to live naturally. [3] To achieve Buddha-hood there is no place for deliberate effort. The only method is to carry on one's ordinary and uneventful tasks: relieve one's bowels, pass water, wear one's clothes, eat one's meals, and when tired, lie down. The simple fellow will laugh at you, but the wise will understand."

1 This traslation comes from Youlan Feng; Derk Bodde :A short history of Chinese philosophy, New York, Macmillan Co., 1948.
2 Youlan Feng; Derk Bodde :A short history of Chinese philosophy, New York, Macmillan Co., 1948.
3 Youlan Feng; Derk Bodde :A short history of Chinese philosophy, New York, Macmillan Co., 1948.

Chinese ideal of liberation even show the daily characteristics. The Venerable Master TaiXu（太虚）even said that, "When we enjoy a full development of our own humanity, this time, we nearly equivalent to a Buddha, the road of this practice is the real reality of Buddhahood" This thinking mode may be influenced by Chinese traditional culture since Confucian intellectuals believe that people should start from cultivating themselves to realize their duty toward the society, which also emphasis the importance of daily behavior.

Most of Chinese people can tell some Buddhism stories or recite a few Buddhist chants. In the eyes of the Chinese people, the Buddha is not a God, but a sign of wisdom. Chinese people abandon the shackles of formalism when they accept Buddhism. At the same time, they inherit Buddhist spirit derived from India. Japanese scholar Suzuki used to say, "Zen could not rise and flourish in any other land or among any other people."

 Buddhism Changing Chinese morality

Secondly, people's attitude toward morality has changed a lot under the spread of Buddhism. Buddhism initiate that people do good things in their life. As the sutra said, "Do no evil. Do all that is good. Purify your own mind. This is all Buddha's Teaching".

The Buddhist theory of transmigration is very popular among common people in China. With the fear of going to the hell and the hope of living happily in the next life, people accept the moral rules proposed by Buddhism and tend to do kind things to each other. People believe that the kind things they do will bring good results to them. And, when people who are suffering or puzzled, they turn to Buddhism by praying to Bodhisattva or seeking for help from Buddhist monks. The bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is regarded as the savior in the mind of common people. It is believed that he can solve many problems people meet in daily life. Chinese people create many new images of him, one of which is the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara with one thousand hands, referring his ability to fulfill different desires and wishes of people.

And, in China, kind people who like to help others are called a "living Buddha" or "living bodhisattva", which is a high praise for others. In short, the introduction of Buddhism greatly enriched the ethical life of the Chinese people, which makes them more aware of the spirit of love and compassion, advocating benefiting all the people, and the concept of karma, advocating being responsible for their own actions.

 Buddhism Changing Chinese Arts

Thirdly, from the aspect of arts, Buddhism has a far-reaching influence on the spirit of Chinese people. Taking literature as an example, new spheres of meaning, new writing styles and new rhetorical methods are brought to Chinese literature by Buddhism. Not only did Buddhism bring us Buddhist scriptures, which are great and magnificent literary works themselves, but also push forward the creation of literature. Many scholars in ancient China have a background of Buddhist theory. They communicate with Buddhist masters through literature, during the process of which thousands of poems and articles are created.

This enhances the position of China as a kingdom of poetry and also nourishes the spiritual lives of the entire nation. Poets, like Wang Wei（王维）, Bai Juyi（白居易） and so on, absorbed the thoughts of Buddhism, especially the spirit of Chan and wrote many famous poems fulfilling with Buddhist sense. Other than poems, Buddhist influence is revealed in other type of literature. One of the Four Famous Novels in Chinese history, Journey to the West（西游记）, tell a story of a Buddhist monk named Tang Seng（唐僧） with his three disciples, going to the west for the Buddhist Sutras. He rides a white horse, goes through eighty-one ordeals, and takes fourteen years to get the Buddhist Sutras. The figure of Tang Seng（唐僧） is so famous that almost every person can tell the story of him. Prototype of Tang Seng （唐僧）is Master Xuan Zang（玄奘） in Tang Dynasty, an unaccompanied pioneer to India who made a pilgrimage of 17 years all alone, traveled 50,000 Li all on foot, traversing 130 countries and throughout the Western Regions and India, left behind many precious translated Buddhist scriptures.

Besides, Buddhism also influences the development of architecture, painting, music, medicine and so on. You can see Buddhist pagoda, statue in many places of China, some of them enjoy a worldwide fame and are regarded as valuable legacy in the history of architecture. Buddhist painting not only enriched the content, but also changed the style of Chinese painting. Buddhist singing has been brought to China since the second century. Indian medicine and pharmacology are introduced into China through Buddhism. Generally speaking, we can find the contribution of Buddhism in all spheres of arts area.

 Buddhist influencing in social life

Finally, I would like to talk about Buddhist influence in social life. From the day when it was introduced into China, Buddhism plays a significant role in social welfare. They took up the medical profession and distributed medicine; they built bridges and roads; they dug wells and established schools; they plant trees and cared tramps. "To benefit all sentient beings" is not only a doctrine of Buddhism, but also the principal of Buddhist's behavior.

Besides, many tourist resorts in China are famous for the monasteries located in them. The natural beauty and religious landscape attracted people from all over the world. There is an old saying goes like this, "the monks nearly occupy all the famous mountains in the world; Buddha speaks the most beautiful language in the world". Buddhism is on the half of benevolence, lustration, and quietism in the mind of common people.

In present China, with the peaceful development of the whole nation, the policy of religious freedom has got a complete implementation since the reformation and opening up. Chinese Buddhism once again rejuvenates its immortal youth and plays a more and more important role in every aspect of culture. Walking in streets, you can see that Buddhist necklaces, pendants and talismans are wore by different people, from young to old. In this bustle world, people pay more and more attention to the physical and mental health. Many of them choose to live a quiet and simple life, believing that Buddhist practice can help them to revive their lives.

This is the Buddhist identity in China. In the first day of this Lunar New Year 2011, the number of pilgrim who went to Lama Temple in Beijing was 66000, to achieve the biggest in these years. Part of them was younger. In 2010, Research Center of Chinese Religion and Society in Pur-

due University stated the study's report about the data of Chinese religious Believers. In this report, there were 185 million Buddhist identities, but 17.30 million is the true Buddhist who participates in the refuge ceremony. I also don't know how much the lay Buddhist is. But in five major religions in contemporary China, the influence of Buddhism is most formal, the believers also is the largest.

In short, maybe Buddhism is not the only way to accomplish tranquility and happiness. The diversity of world culture should be respected. However, we should never ignore Buddhism's impact on helping people to get a happy life. It is a dawn 2,500 years ago, under the bodhi tree, where the Buddhism starts. Since then, Buddhism starts its own tour around the world. It travelled across the sea and mountain, came to Middle-earth, accepted by the generous Chinese people and blend in their own life blood, circulated all around. Today, more and more foreign friends begin to appear among the major temples in China. We believe that Buddhism in China bears the fruit of wisdom, the fruit of compassion, the fruit of the liberation, not only continue to nourish the Chinese nation, but also can be shared by friends all over world whoever is willing to seek happiness in the Buddhist world. This ancient religion, used to be changed by Chinese culture, and change the spirit of Chinese people also, is now changing the whole world.

Speakers on

The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-being of Humanity

Symposium Session 1: Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation

The Celebration of 2600 Years of the Buddha's Enlightenment

Rev. Noriaki Kunitomo, Japan

We are summoned by this honored reception, the Celebration of 2600 Years of the Buddha's Enlightenment.

On behalf of the members of World Zen Buddhist Association in Japan, I pay my deep respects to people here; Buddhist representatives visiting from across the world for the goal of peace, all the Buddhists, Thai officials, and especially to the people at MCU who eagerly worked for holding this celebration. Also I devote my prayers, "May the blessings of the Triple Gem guide and bless us all."

On March 11 last year, an extremely large earthquake in magnitude 9.0 attacked the northeast region of Japan. Subsequently tsunami attacked many times in the most height of 40 m destroying one fourth of cities and towns located at the seashore of the Pacific Ocean in the north side from the capital, Tokyo. The number of fatal casualties was 16000 and 3300 people are still missing. Eventually the total number of casualties recorded as 400 thousand at one point.

Furthermore, explosions at the nuclear power plants in Fukushima prefecture occurred by the tsunami attacks and the shortage of cooling water. Finally they could halt the potential spreading of radioactive ray, however, the power plants have been under risky condition.

Japan is the only country to have experienced atomic bomb attacks in the world. However, the nuclear reactors accidents occurred, which was claimed as the worst event. I sincerely apologize for the world-wide impact of this accident and deem that it is the time for Japanese people to seriously consider this event and to judge Japanese government ability on administrative control of nuclear power plants.

Cities and towns in the region were totally destroyed by the large-scaled earthquakes and tsunamis. The refugees needed evacuation centers. Buddhism temples in the region became the active evacuation centers to save the refugees for several months. During the evacuation period, priests and supporters in the Buddhism temples located in the area from Tokyo to western Japan supported the refugees sending them materials needed. Not only providing materials but also mental support for refugees is the main support in which younger Buddhist priests have been working for the refugees with no house, no work place and no job.

Besides, people in the new religions, Christianity or Islam are supporting the refugees as well. Among the supporting activities, emotional care or grief counseling is a very important care for the refugees and volunteering Buddhism priests are providing "listening" to the refugees visiting around the refugees' temporary houses.

In October last year, a big flood damaged the area in Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia and the people in the area are still suffering from the damage. The damage in Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has been so heavy since the flood occurred that I needed to visit the university to see the damaged buildings with the Vice Rector, Ven. Sawai in February.

In the past, human being tried to keep harmonized life with nature. However, recently the people's thought egoistically sifted to create convenient condition advantageous only for scientific or cultural development, leading large-scaled deforestation or industrialization of farmlands. They cut trees in mountains and built dams stemming the river flow and releasing polluted water into the ocean as if they could have controlled nature.

I assume that almost all of the recent natural calamity might be warning from Mother Nature to human being egoism. We should have more humility to nature.

Development and prosperity of humankind should be based upon preservation of harmonized life with nature which had been taken over by our ancestors. I deeply concern about our near future which would result in demolition if only scientific or cultural development should be emphasized.

Buddhism is a religion in peace. Now it is the time for Buddhists and all the people over the world to take strong action for future life harmonized with nature. At first, with strong mind, we need to get together over a border and to retrieve intrinsic mentality to appreciate nature and to keep blessings of nature. We need to eliminate ill mind chasing only selfish desire or egoism, to contribute to create prosperity with conscience over the world, and to save frail people who are suffering from prejudice or violence.

This year is the memorial year with the celebration of 2600 years of the Buddha's enlightenment. We should regard this extremely big disaster as a hardship given to Buddhists and should respect the spirit of Buddha. The precepts of Buddhist laws showing the spirit of Buddha is "neutral way," in another words, "the law of nature and the value of life."

On the base of the spirit of Buddha with the celebration of 2600 years, all the Buddhists from the worlds should join together in order to establish rescue teams in each country, stock rescue supplies and set up rescue networks to be a world wide network. Now I would like to ask all the Buddhists attending this celebration to consolidate forces for this meaningful establishment.

I consider that we need to prepare for possible disaster in future in a worldwide team.

Everyone here attending this international meeting could prepare well and enough for next big disaster so that there would be no more victims in future. Shall we do it in a world wide team?

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation

Prof. Vanchai Vatanasapt, M.D.,ONZM, Thailand

There are many things on the teachings of Lord Buddha that led to Reconciliation. The fourth Noble Truths are the main one of every other process. Many of the Citizens concern will only keep themselves in the first Noble Truth which is suffering((dukkha) but not even understand that the correct meaning is "Life means suffering". Most of the problems nowadays are due to the different in opinions on beliefs but do not know how to live together without having to be the enemies. With this diversified thought that make this world develop up to now though at many times human being use war as the answer as in the World War or even the fighting in the different parts of the world now. The second Noble Truth is "the origin of suffering is attachment" which is something that we are ***craving and clinging to***. Tiger Woodshad added a deeply **apologetic** to his lengthy litany of sins, regrets and promises of repentance that he needs to return to Buddhist traditions. He said that his mother taught him the traditions and moral philosophy but as an adult, he drifted away. Now it's time to return to finding balance and being centered again. Woods said:*Buddhism teaches that* ***a craving for things outside ourselves causes an unhappy and pointless search for security****. It teaches me to stop following every impulse and to learn restraint*. That come to the Third Noble Truth that is "*the cessation of suffering is attainable"* follow by the Fourth Noble Truth :*"the path to the cessation of suffering"*.**The Noble Eightfold Path** is the Fourth Noble Truths and the first element of the Noble Eightfold Path is an understanding

of the Four Noble Truths. It is also known as the Middle Path or Middle Way.All eight elements of the Path begin with the word **"Right"**, which translates the word samyañc (in Sanskrit) or sammā (in Pāli). 'Samma'(สัมมา)is also translated as 'wholesome', 'wise' and 'skillful'but the most important thing before you do anything especially "reconciliation", you need to understand the meanings and the process correctly or " right understanding". And to begin the reconciliation of any kind on any conflict you need to begin with "Right View" (สัมมาทิฏฐิ)and "Right Intention"(สัมมาสังกัปปะ) follow by Right Speech (สัมมาวาจา) and many other Rights in this Noble Eightfold Path. If anyone want to reconcile and try to say I will do the reconciliation with others, it is important to begin with this "Samma" or "Right View and Right Intention" first.

The most flagrant case to illustrate the application of the Buddha's principles in practice of Reconciliation is that of Asoka the Righteous, the third emperor of the Mauryan Dynasty of India (circa 265-228 BCE).He came to power through a four year war of succession. After having been in power for four years he embraced Buddhism as his personal religion. Finally having slain so many enemies the remorse he felt was expressed in his own words as "gravely regarded and considered extremely painful".

Four of Asoka's principles[1] relevant to our discussion of reconciliation,would extend to all areas of dispute and conflict. In general terms they are:

a) Treating and supporting all factions alike without discrimination in the development of 'their inner essence' (e. g. their cultural specificity);

b) Restraint in speech (vaci-guti) by not criticizing the opponent inappropriately and, even where criticism is justified, by using civil language;

c) Coming to know the point of view of the opponent or, more precisely, putting oneself in the other's shoes;

d) Getting together (samavayo sadhu) with the opponent for consultation, compromise and consensus.

From this four principles I would like to elaborate to compare to the western teaching of reconciliation in the modern world.

Consider that all men are equal and human's right need to be protected.

Separate men from problems that is "Soft on Human but Hard on Problems".

Empathy not only sympathy, (อัตตานังอุปมังการเร)

Working through using "Public Deliberation" which are "Dialogue" and "Making Choices together" to reach consensus.

1 http://buddhasdharma.blogspot.com/2010/11/buddha-on-reconciliation.html

The one important healing word in reconciliation is the word "Apology". But before one can say "I am sorry" or "apology" one must not only "regret" but "remorse" or "repent". The **True apology** not only the word that you say "I am sorry" but you have to admit wrong doing and responsible for that wrong doing otherwise it will only called "False or Partial Apology".

In conclusion there are many teaching of Lord Buddha that we must learn in the present conflicting society especially in Thailand which conflict has had erupted to be the Manifest Conflict from the Latent Conflict. We need all people to return to religious teaching just like Tiger Wood or PhraRakkiat who use to be the Minister of Public Health of Thailand who dare to admit his wrong doing and turn himself into "Monkhood" and said if I have chance to learn the teaching of Lord Buddha earlier I would not have done what I did. Now with his remorse and repent he is out of the Jail even though the time that he supposed to be in prison has not yet reached according to the court ruling.

Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation

Prof. Kamaleswar Bhattacharya, France

susukhaṃ vata jīvāma verinesu averino /
verinesu manussesu viharāma averino //
(Dhp. 197)

Indeed we live very happily, not hating anyone among those who hate; among men who hate we live without hating anyone.'

The Buddha is said to have uttered this stanza of the *Dhammapada* after having averted a war of water' (an expression that has become familiar to us nowadays) between his relatives, the Sākiyas and the Koliyas.[1]

What is taught in this stanza is forbearance. It was again on the ground that the Buddha had taught forbearance (*khantivāda*) that was achieved by the brahmin Doṇa the reconcialition over the sharing of the relics of the Buddha, as we are told in the *Mahāparinibbānasutta*.[2]

These incidents show, on the other hand, that it is not easy to obtain reconciliation, requiring as it does the intervention of strong

1 *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā* III, pp. 254 ff. References to the Pāli text are in the Pali Text Society's editions.
2 *Dīgha-Nikāya* II, p. 166.

personalities. And we have seen, in our own times, that even strong personalities have not always succeeded in achieving reconciliation, sometimes at the cost of their own lives.

Moreover, one-sided forbearance may lead to indifference and to a situation like the one in which the Buddha's own people, the Sakyas, found themselves when, in the name of the Buddhist precept of not killing (*pāṇātipātā veramaṇī*), they let themselves be killed by the army of furious Viḍūḍabha, rather than killing.[3]

What is, then, the Buddhist remedy to the various conflicts that afflict us and our world?

There is a unique remedy, and it is to be found in the very heart of the Buddha's teaching – like an old city buried in the forest', to use an old Buddhist image. Only, we have to follow the Buddha's method, in other words, we have first to identify the cause of these conflicts.

This is not a difficult task. One does not have to be a Buddhist to realize that all our conflicts derive from one source: egoism. Foremost economists have attributed the financial crisis to greed, and greed is but an aspect of egoism. In recent months, we have heard of egiosm of water'. Egoism is everywhere. It is by egoism that man has killed nature. It is by egoism that stronger nations attack the weaker, rulers kill their own populations …

A sensitive Buddhist scholar recently wrote, talking about Buddhist analysis of the cause of social disharmony and its solutions':

… measures such as removal of economic grievances, diplomatic negotiations and deployment of peacekeeping forces are superficial and temporary solution to the social disharmony … There can be genuine and real harmony, only if each of the individuals sincerely and honestly apprehends and respects others, free from hatred and attachment.[4]

How could that happen? The Buddha sometimes taught the golden rule': There is nothing in the world that is dearer to me than myself, and so is the case with all others. One who wishes one's own good should therefore not harm others:

sabbā disā anuparigamma cetasā

n' ev' ajjhagā piyataram attanā kvaci /

evaṃ piyo puthu attā paresaṃ

tasmā na hiṃse param attakāmo //[5]

But the golden rule' has been little followed, and there is no reason to believe that it will be more followed today than ever before.

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3 See L. Schmithausen, Aspects of the Buddhist Attitude towards War', *Violence Denied*, ed. J. E. M. Houben and K. R. van Kooij (Leiden 1999), p. 49.
4 J. Samten, buddhist Analysis of the Cause of Social Disharmony and its Solutions', *Buddhism and Social Ideals*, ed. H. S. Shukla and B. Kumar (Varanasi: Centre for Buddhist Studies, Banaras Hindu University, 2009), p. 157.
5 See K. Bhattacharya, *Some Thoughts on Early Buddhism with Special Reference to its Relation to the Upaniṣads* (Acharya Dharmananda Kosambi Memorial Lectures, Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Reserch Institute, 1998), p. 7.

The most important teaching of the Buddha, I believe, is the doctrine of *anattā*, usually known as the doctrine of non-soul'. This doctrine sometimes frightened the ancients, and, if I am not wrong, it seldom figures in our discourses nowadays, as if it were outdated, irrelevant to our world. However, it is in this that lies the solution to all our conflicts. So far as I am aware, no religious leader so much emphasized the eradication of the ego as the Buddha did in this doctrine.

What is, then, this terrible doctrine of *anattā*? Here I will have to repeat, to some extent, what I stated on previous occasions. The identification of the individual's essence with the empirical psycho-physical elements of individuality is ingrained in humanity. It was known to the earlier literature of India, the Upaniṣads, which sometimes mention it under mythological garbs. The Buddha clearly says: The ascetics and brahmins who envisage the essence of the individual – the self (*ātman/attan*) – in diverse ways envisage either all the five aggregates (*khandha*) which constitute our empirical individuality or one or other of them.[6]

It was against this background that the Upaniṣads proclaimed the *ātman*, which is not an individual substance, a soul', but, identical with the *brahman*, the Being itself, the universal, absolute Consciousness beyond the subject-object split – the transcendent Impersonality which man realisizes through the negation of his individuality.

The Buddha, more preoccupied with liberation and the good of the greatest number' (*bahujanahita*), taught *anattā*. The elements of individuality are all impermanent (*anicca*) and hence painful (*dukkha*). But, when one is attached to what is painful, saying: this is mine, this am I, this is my *ātman* ', can one understand one's own misery and liberate oneself from it?[7]

The Buddha, therefore, analyzing the aggregates, says: What is impermanent is painful (*yad aniccaṃ taṃ dukkhaṃ*), what is painful is *anattā* (*yaṃ dukkhaṃ tad anattā*), and of what is *anattā*, one should understand through right knowledge: this is not mine, this am I not, this is not my *ātman*' (*yad anattā taṃ n' etaṃ mama n' eso 'ham asmi na m' eso attā ti evam etaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbaṃ*).[8]

Now, if there is egoism, it is because of the false identification of ourselves with our psycho-physical individuality, which engenders the notions of I' and mine' (*ahaṃkāra, mamaṃkāra*).[9] With the cessation of this identification, therefore, ceases egoism.

And the Buddha has left an incomparable message to the modern world,[10] showing the way to realize this goal. It is the most venerated *Sutta* of mindfulness' (*satipaṭṭhāna*),[11] on which is based the Vipassanā method of meditation.

There are four kinds of *satipaṭṭhāna*, consisting in the observation of the body (*kāyānupassanā*), the observation of the feelings (*vedanānupassanā*), the observation of the mind (*cittānupassanā*),

6 *ye hi keci, bhikkhave, samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā anekavihitaṃ attānaṃ samanupassamānā samanupassanti sabbe te pañcupādānakkhandhe samanupassanti etesaṃ vā aññataraṃ*. *Saṃyutta-Nikāya* III, p. 46.

7 *yo nu kho dukkhaṃ allīno dukkhaṃ upagato dukkhaṃ ajjhosito dukkhaṃ etaṃ mama eso 'ham asmi eso me attā ti samanupassati api nu kho so sāmaṃ vā dukkhaṃ parijāneyya dukkhaṃ vā parikkhepetvā viharayya*. *Majjhima-Nikāya* I, p. 233.

8 See K. Bhattacharya, *L'Ātman-Brahman dans le Bouddhisme ancien* (Paris 1973), p. 12, n. 3.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

10 Eine Buddha-Botschaft für unsere Zeit', (Bhikkhu) Nyanaponika, *Satipaṭṭhāna*, Konstanz 1950.

11 *Majjhima-Nikāya, Sutta* 10; *Dīgha-Nikāya*, Sutta 22.

and the observation of the mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā*).

Strictly speaking, the first two belong to the *samatha* (concentration) type of meditation, and the second two alone constitute the *vipassanā* (insight) type; and there is a hierarchy of levels among those who are apt to practice them – as the great commentator, Buddhaghosa, pointed out.[12] But, nowadays, all of them are included in Vipassanā, excepting, perhaps, the *ānāpānasati*, the mindfulness concerning the breathing in and out, which Tradition includes in the observation of the body.

However, all these observations' lead to the same result. We observe our body, our bodily activities in our everyday life, we observe our feelings, we observe our mind in its different states, and so on. We realize that everything comes and goes, that nothing is permanent, and thus we realize the three basic characteristics of all phenomenal things, according to Buddhism, namely that everything is impermanent (*anicca*), hence painful (*dukkha*), and hence non-self (*anattā*).

The false notion of self which each of us has is thus eliminated. With this elimination comes the elimination of the false distinction between others' and self', and this elimination means total integration, on which are based the cardinal virtues of *mettā* and *karuṇā*, friendship' and compassion', from which flow all the other virtues. Herein lies the source of true reconcialition.

12 *Papañcasūdanī* I, p. 239; *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* III, p. 754.

Buddhist Wisdom: Providing Relief and Reconciliation to Social Workers in America

Dr. Phil Tan, USA

May all beings everywhere, big and small, seen and unseen be safe, healthy, and happy. May their lives unfold with ease.

Introduction

This presentation provides the viewpoints of four individualswho are members of a book/mediation clubthat meets monthly in Southern California to meditate and discuss ways of maneuvering their lives and approaching their work in a more spiritual way. Ideas, derived fromBuddhist philosophy and psychology, are discussed. Between six and twelve individuals are present at each monthly meeting. Almost all the members of this group are social workers.

The presenter, who is a professor of Social Work, coordinates the meetings and leads the meditation. A Buddhist monk is present and serves as the group's spiritual advisor. The meetings are held at a temple or in the home of a member. Meetings beginwith a brief check in. This is proceeded by mediation on *Metta*. A discussion of a reading (e.g., from the Dharmapada) or topics that the group members raise(e.g., the issue of impermanence and death) ensues. The monk who provides spiritual guidance to the group facilitates the discussion and provides reflections and insights inspired by Buddhist thought.Meetings last about one and the halfhours and is followed by the sharing of some food.

Four members of this sangha were interviewed for this report. Theyprovide direct social work services and counselclients in the fields of mental health (e.g.,working with individuals who have schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and who are homeless), youth rehabilitation (e.g., working with youth with behavioral and substance abuse problems), care of older adults (e.g., coordinating-services, runningsupport groups for older adults who may live alone), and hospice (e.g.,working with individuals who have a terminal illness and their families). Two of these interviewees identify as Buddhist and the other two as Catholics.

Findings

The following are recurring themes thatthe four members of this group reported to have gain by being members of the book/meditation club:

They learn about Buddhist philosophy and psychology.

They get support from the other members of the book/mediation club since they are mostly social workers and they can relate to easily.

They learn and benefit from meditating together.

They learn how to deal with clients better.

They learn how to deal with burnout at work.

They develop their spirituality.

1. Learning about Buddhist philosophy and psychology

The members of this book/mediation club reported that they benefited fromjoining the group because it helped them learn more about Buddhist philosophy and psychology, and how these can be applied to their lives and the lives of their clients. One member reported

Even though I am Buddhist I didn't know much about Buddhism. ..The book/mediation club helps me read and learn more about [Buddhist philosophy and psychology] and when I am not satisfied or don't understand it I ask Bhante. I like his interpretations.

A member outlined that she learnt the importance of the mind in shaping our world. She said

The group helps me learn the importance of the mind in organization, motivation and influencing our lives.

The members reported that learning about Buddhist wisdom and in particular about equanimity helped her become more effective when she met with her clients. The following were what they reported

The group helps me to have a better approach when dealing with clients. Being impartial and just seeing the situation I have no control over… nothing is going to hurt and bother me.

For example, if I see something or hear something really traumatic at my work, I will react quickly but [I know that I] can also return and say ok, this is not about me. I can distance myself from the situation and provide kind thoughts and caring for people no matter what they are

going through.... Some of my clients are struggling from very bad addition…it is their poor choice. I don't want to judge them or say you should do this or you should do that. I provide an atmosphere of care and loving kindness when I am with my clients.

Another said that when other members of the group talked about how they dealt with difficult situation and how Buddhist philosophy helps them through difficult situations, this was wisdom to him.

2. Getting support from sangha members who are also social workers

The members also reported that they obtain support from the group, especially since they were mostly social workers. Because they worked in the same profession, they could understand and easily relatewith each other's experiences.

Through the club I know that I am not alone.

I learn about the ways the [other book/mediation club members] cope. Sometimes they provide insights and I learn from them. I [sometimes] realize that my coping mechanism is not the best. I therefore learn new and better ways of coping from them.

The group helps me to have a better attitude about the reality of a social worker's life.... Everyday I see suffering and I also have my own suffering…I like to have a [more spiritual] approach toward life.

Listening to other people's perspective was really nice. I just want to learn and view the world in a different way.

One member mentioned that the group is very open and what is discussed is in plain language and so he could understand Buddhist wisdom easily.

3. Benefit from meditating together

All the members mentioned that they had heard about the positive aspects of meditation but had not meditated before they joined the group. They mentioned many positive benefits they derived from meditation and that they really liked the experience.

I like the energy that meditation brings.... Everybody is in the moment; not in the past or future. When we meditate, I can feel my presence and it feels like I am awake.

Whenever I come to the club, my mind is at peaceful… I feel relax and I enjoy meditation. Meditation allows my mind to be peaceful ... I feel like my mind is not moving. I feel like there is no stress in my life… it affects my emotions.

One member reported that when she meditated and was prompted to think about her pain and about others, it brought up a lot of feelings. These were the things she did notthink about and hence did not connect with. She further mentioned that connecting with them made her feel a sense of relief and that it made her feel a lot better.

4. Learning how to deal with clients

Amember reported that the group helped her establish a mental state of equanimity with an open heart when dealings with clients. Another member mentioned that the discussions with group members reinforced his belief that his social work clients can have rich and meaningful lives.

Happiness can be found every day…I tell my clients, if you have a chance to be happy, be happy.

…Buddhist teaching stresses not to focus on material things but to be rich in spirituality… I believe that my clients can be spiritually rich even though they are not [materially] rich.

5. Learning how to deal with burnout at work

As social workers, the members reported that they carried heavy case loads. In addition, they frequently encountered clients who are in pain. In fact many of their clients werenot getting better. The members reportedbecoming stressed andfeeling burnout. They reported that the group helped them ameliorate feeling stressed and avoidingburnout.

When we see our clients suffering, we too share their pain. They lost hope and a sense of self…these impacts me as a social worker… I come to the group to help me deal with the suffering I see.

I know what I have been taught by the church and I pray…but beyond that I like to learn more ways of reducing stress in my work and life.

6. Developing their spirituality

All the members reported that the book/meditation club helped their spiritual lives to grow deeper.

I thought of myself as having some sort of spirituality but about three or four years ago it dissipated. I don't think I have that connection. That is one of the reasons I really wanted to join the [sangha]... I don't regularly attend church. .. I know that spirituality is to be found within oneself first; that is why I wanted to find something new.

I am looking for spirituality because sometimes I think that what I am doing is not enough… I feel that there needs to have higher meaning in my life...There has to be a connection. I want to be more connected with the environment I live in and I want to be ok with myself and [as a social worker] help others fulfill that.

Conclusion

By being professional social worker these individuals areengaging in right livelihood. However, these individuals reported that they jobs wereoften stressful. Theyindicated that from time to time they felt burnout. As with many other social workers in Americathese individuals are burdened with heavy case loads, have little support from supervisors and colleagues, and are constantly dealing with suffering. The findings of this study reveal that members of this social work book/mediation clubfelt that their groupenhanced their lives in the following ways:

1. Learning about Buddhist philosophy and psychology
2. Getting support from the sangha members who are social workers and whom they can relate
3. Learning and benefitting from meditating together
4. Learning how to deal with clients better
5. Learning how to deal with burnout at work, and
6. Enriching their spiritual lives.

As indicated by the information provided by the four members of this book/meditation clubthis group of social workers that meets in Southern California, and others like it throughout America, are helping its participants become members of the greater *Noble Sangha*;and who are skillful practitioners of compassion and wisdom.As one of the members of this group indicated

I think life is a continuous journey and I look forward to learning from Bhante, the readings, the professor, colleagues,and everybody, including my clients.

Speakers on

The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-being of Humanity

Symposium Session 2: Buddhist Wisdom and Environment

Buddhism's Holistic Worldview

Prof. Dr. Donald K Swearer, USA

Despite significant variations among the different Buddhist traditions that have evolved over its 2500 year journey throughout Asia and now in the West, Buddhists see the world as conjoined on four levels: existentially, morally, cosmologically, and ontologically. Existentially,Buddhists affirm that all sentient beings share the fundamental conditions of birth, old age, suffering, and death. The existential realization of the universality of suffering lies at the core of the Buddha's teaching. Insight into the nature of suffering, its cause, cessation, and the path to the cessation of suffering constitutes the essence of the Buddha's enlightenment experience). This quadratic teaching forms the basis of the Four Noble Truths, the Buddha's first public teaching. The tradition conveys this universal truth via the story of the founder's path to Niirvana and the logic of the Four Noble Truths.

Buddhism links the existential condition of the universality of suffering with the moral virtue of compassion. That the Buddha after his enlightenment decides to share his existential insight into the cause and the path to the cessation of suffering rather than selfishly keeping this knowledge to himself, is regarded by the tradition as an act of universal compassion. Buddhist environmentalists assert that the mindful awareness of the universality of suffering produces compassionate empathy for all forms of life, particularly for all sentient species. They interpret the *Dhammapada*'s ethical injunction not to do evil but to do good as a moral principle advocating the non-violent elevation of suffering,

an ideal embodied in the prayer of universal loving-kindness that concludes many Buddhist rituals: "May all beings be free from enmity; may all beings be free from injury; may all beings be free from suffering; may all beings be happy." Out of a concern for the total living environment, Buddhist environmentalists extend loving-kindness, compassion, and respect beyond people and animals to include plants and the earth itself: "We humans think we are smart, but an orchid…knows how to produce noble, symmetrical flowers, and a snail knows how to make a beautiful, well-proportioned shell. We should bow deeply before the orchid and the snail and join our palms reverently before the monarch butterfly and the magnolia tree." (Thich Nhat Hanh, "The Sun My Heart")

The concepts of *karma* and rebirth (*samsara)* integrate the existential sense of a shared common condition of all sentient life forms with themoral nature of the Buddhist cosmology**.** Not unlike the biological sciences, rebirth links human and animal species. Evolution maps commonalties and differences among species on the basis of physical and genetic traits. Rebirth maps them on moral grounds. Every form of sentient life participates in a karmic continuum traditionally divided into three world-levels and a hierarchical taxonomy of five or six life forms. Although this continuum constitutes a moral hierarchy, differences among life forms and individuals are relative, not absolute. Traditional Buddhism privileges humans over animals, animals over hungry ghosts, male gender over the female, monk over laity but all forms of karmically conditioned life--human, animal, divine, demonic--are related within contingent, samsaric time: "In the long course of rebirth there is not one among living beings with form who has not been mother, father, brother, sister, son, or daughter, or some other relative. Being connected with the process of taking birth, one is kin to all wild and domestic animals, birds, and beings born from the womb " (*Lankavatara Sutra*). Nirvana, the Buddhist *summum bonum*, offers the promise of transforming karmic conditionedness into an unconditioned state of spiritual liberation, a realization potentially available to all forms of sentient life on the karmic continuum. That plants and trees or the land itself have a similar potential for spiritual liberation became an explicit doctrine in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism but may even have been part of popular Buddhist belief from earliest times--in sum, a realization that all life forms share both a common problematic and promise: "*bodhisattvas* each of these, I call the large trees." (*Lotus Sutra).*

Although the Buddhist doctrines of *karma* and rebirth link together all forms of sentient existence in a moral continuum, Buddhist ethics focus on human agency and its consequences. The inclusion of plants and animals in Buddhist schemes of salvation is important philosophically because it attributes inherent value to non-human forms of life, but humans have been the primary agents in creating the present ecological crisis and will bear the major responsibility for its solution. The myth of origins in the canon of Theravada Buddhism describes the deleterious impact of human activity on the primordial natural landscape (*Aggañña Sutta*). Unlike the Garden of Eden story in the Hebrew Bible where human agency centers on the God-human relationship, the Buddhist story of first origins describes the negative impact of humans on the earth as a result of their selfishness and greed. In the Buddhist mythological Eden, the earth flourishes naturally but greed and desire lead to division and ownership of the land that in turn promotes violent conflict, destruction, and chaos. It is human agency in the Buddhist myth of first origins that destroys the natural order of things. Although change is inherent in nature, Buddhists believe that natural processes are directly affected by human morality (Lily de Silva, "The Hills Wherein My Soul Delights," *Buddhism and Ecology*, ed. Martine Batchelor and Kerry Brown). From the Buddhist perspective our relationship to the natural environment involves an intrinsic moral equation; hence, an environmental policy

based primarily on a utilitarian cost-benefit analysis cannot solve the environmental crisis. The moral issues of greed and violence are at the heart of the matter.

The Buddha's enlightenment vision (Nirvana) incorporates the major elements of the Buddhist worldview. Tradition records that during the night of this defining experience the Blessed One first recalled his previous lives within the karmic continuum; then he perceived the fate of all sentient beings within the cosmic hierarchy; finally he fathomed the nature of suffering and the path to its cessation formulated as the Four Noble Truths and the law of interdependent co-arising (*paticca samuppada*). The Buddha's enlightenment evolved in a specific sequence: from an understanding of the *particular* (his personal karmic history), to the *general* (the karmic history of humankind), and finally to the *principle* underlying the cause and cessation of suffering. Subsequently, this principle is further generalized as a *universal law of causality*: "on the arising of this, that arises; on the cessation of this, that ceases." Buddhist environmentalists find in the principle of causal interdependence a vision that integrates all aspects of the ecosphere--particular individuals and general species--in terms of the principle of mutual co-dependence.

The three stages of the Buddha's enlightenment experience suggests a model for moral reasoning applicable to environmental ethics that integrates general principles, collective action guides, and particular contexts. Effective schemes of distributive justice require general principles such as those embodied in the proposed United Nations Earth Charter embodied in enforceable programs contextualized in particular regions and nation-states.

In the Buddhist cosmological model individual entities are by their very nature relational, thereby undermining the autonomous self over against the "other" whether human, animal, or vegetable. Buddhist environmentalists see their worldview as a rejection of hierarchical dominance of one human over another or humans over nature, and as the basis of an ethic of empathetic compassion that respects biodiversity. In the view of the Thai monk, Buddhadasa Bhikkhu,

"The entire cosmos is a cooperative. The sun, the moon and the stars live together as a cooperative. The same is true for humans and animals, trees, and the earth. When we realize that the world is a mutual, interdependent, cooperative enterprise...then we can build a noble environment. If our lives are not based on this truth, then we shall perish."

In later schools of Buddhist thought the cosmological vision of interdependent causality evolved into a more substantive sense of ontological unity. Metaphorically, the image of Indra's net found in the Hua-yen tradition's *Avatamsaka Sutra* has been especially important in Buddhist ecological discussions: "Just as the nature of earth is one while beings each live separately, and the earth has no thought of oneness or difference, so is the truth of all the Buddhas." For Gary Snyder, the American poet and Zen practitioner, the Hua-yen image of the universe as a vast web of many-sided jewels each constituted by the reflections of all the other jewels in the web and each jewel being the image of the entire universe symbolizes the world as a universe of bioregional ecological communities. Buddhist environmentalists argue, furthermore, that ontological notions such as Buddha-nature or Dharma-nature (*e.g.,buddhakaya, tathagatagarbha, dharmak¡ya, dharmadhatu*) provide a basis for unifying all existent entities in a common sacred universe, even though the tradition privileges human life vis-à-vis spiritual realization. For T'ien-t'ai monks in eighth-century China, the belief in a universal Buddha-nature blurred the distinction between sentient and non-sentient life forms and logically led to the view that plants, trees, and the earth itself could achieve enlightenment.

Kukai (774-835), the founder of the Japanese Shingon school, and Dogen (1200-1253), the founder of the Soto Zen sect, described universal Buddha-nature in naturalistic terms: "If plants and trees were devoid of Buddhahood, waves would then be without humidity" (Kukai); "The sutras [*i.e.*, the *dharma*] are the entire universe, mountains and rivers and the great wide earth, plants and trees" (Dogen). Buddhist environmentalists cite Dogen's view as support for the preservation of species biodiversity; a view that ascribes intrinsic value to all species while at the same time affirming their shared dharmic nature.

For Buddhists the principle of interdependence authenticated by the Buddha is a universal, natural law expressed through the narrative of the Buddha's own *nirvana* and his teaching (*dharma*). Buddhist scriptures convey an understanding of this truth in metaphor, story, and discursive logic. Throughout Buddhist history poetry has also been an important literary tool for conveying the *dharma*and the truths of the interdependence of humans and nature. An early Pali Sutta extols nature's beauty: "Those rocky heights with hue of dark blue clouds/ Where lies embossed many a shining lake/Of crystal-clear, cool waters, and whose slopes/ The herds of Indra cover and bedeck/Those are the hills wherein my soul delights." (*Theragata*). East Asian traditions under the influence of Daoism best represent this tradition as in the poetry of the early ninth century Chinese Buddhist poet and layman, Han-shan: "As for me, I delight in the everyday Way/ Among mist-wrapped vines and rocky caves/ Here in the wilderness I am completely free/ With my friends, the white clouds, idling forever/ There are roads, but they do not reach the world/ Since I am mindless, who can rouse my thoughts?/ On a bed of stone I sit, alone in the night/ While the round moon climbs up Cold Mountain." These poems suggest nature's potential for inspiring the human spirit to reach beyond an instrumental, utilitarian attitude toward the environment.

An Ecology of Human Flourishing

Buddhism arose in north India in the fifth century B. C. E. at a time when the region was undergoing a process of urbanization and political centralization accompanied by commercial development and the formation of artisan and merchant classes. The creation of towns and the expansion of an agrarian economy led to the clearing of forests and other tracts of uninhabited land. These changes influenced early Buddhism in several ways. Indic Buddhism was certainly not biocentric and the strong naturalistic sentiments that infused Buddhism in China, Korea, and Japan appear to have been absent from early monastic Buddhism, although naturalism played a role in popular piety. Nonetheless, the natural world is central in the Buddhist conception of human flourishing perhaps, in part, because of the very transformation of the natural environment in which it was born. As we shall see, while nature as a value in and of itself may not have played a major role in the development of early Buddhist thought and practice, it was a necessary component of the tradition's articulation of an ecology of human flourishing.

Even though the picture of the Buddha seated under the tree of enlightenment traditionally has not been interpreted as a paradigm for ecological thinking, today's Buddhist environmental activists point out that the decisive events in the Buddha's life occurred in natural settings: the Buddha Gotama was born, attained enlightenment, and died under trees. The textual record, furthermore, testifies to the importance of forests, not only as an environment preferred for spiritual practices such as meditation but also as a place where laity sought instruction. Historically, in Asia and increasingly in the West, Buddhists have situated centers of practice and teaching in forests and among mountains at some remove from the hustle and bustle of urban life. The Buddha's own

example provides the original impetus for such locations: "Seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I wandered...until...I saw a delightful stretch of land and a lovely woodland grove, and a clear flowing river with a delightful forest so I sat down thinking, 'Indeed, this is an appropriate place to strive for the ultimate realization of...Nirvana'" (*Ariyapariyesana Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya)*. Lavish patronage and the traffic of pilgrims often complicated and compromised the solitude and simple life of forest monasteries, but forests, rivers, and mountains constitute an important factor in the Buddhist ecology of human flourishing. Recall, for example, the Zen description of enlightenment wherein natural phenomena such as rivers and mountains are perceived as loci of the sacred as in Dogen's "Mountains and Water Sutra." Although religious practitioners often tested their spiritual mettle in wild nature, the norm appears to be a relatively benign state of nature conducive to quiet contemplation, or by the naturalistic gardens that one finds in many Japanese Zen monasteries originally located on the outskirts of towns. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu called his forest monastery in south Thailand the Garden of Empowering Liberation observing: "The deep sense of calm that nature provides through separation from the stress that plagues us in the day-to-day world protects our heart and mind. The lessons nature teaches us lead to a new birth beyond suffering caused by our acquisitive self-preoccupation." For Buddhist enviromentalists, centers like Buddhadasa's Garden of Empowering Liberation present an example of a sustainable lifestyle grounded in the values of moderation, simplicity, and non-acquisitiveness. Technology alone cannot solve the eco-crisis. More importantly, it requires a transformation of values and of lifestyle. Buddhadasa's model of the Garden of Empowering Liberation brings an ethico-spiritual critique to the view that science and technology will be able to reconcile our economy and environment.

Buddhadasa intended the Garden of Empowering Liberation not as a retreat from the world but as a place where all forms of life--humans, animals, and plants--live as a cooperative microcosm of a larger ecosystem and as a community where humans can practice an ecological ethic. Such an ethic highlights the virtues of restraint, simplicity, loving-kindness, compassion, equanimity, patience, wisdom, nonviolence, and generosity. These virtues represent moral ideals for all members of the Buddhist community--monk, lay person, political leader, ordinary citizen, male, female. Political leaders who are mandated to maintain the peace and security of the nation, are admonished to adhere to the ideal non-violence. King Asoka, the model Buddhist ruler, is admired for his rejection of animal sacrifice and the protection of animals as well as building hospices and other public works. The Buddhist ethic of distributive justice extols the merchant who generously provides for the needy. Even ordinary Thai rice farmers traditionally left a portion of rice unharvested in their fields for the benefit of the poor and for hungry herbivores. The twin virtues of wisdom and compassion define the spiritual perfection of the *bodhisattva* praised by Śantideva, the eighth century Indian poet-monk in these words: "May I be the doctor and the medicine/ And may I be the nurse/ For all sick beings in the world/ Until everyone is healed/ May I become an inexhaustible treasure/ For those who are poor and destitute/ May I turn into all things they could need/ And may these be placed close beside them." ((*Bodhicary¡vat¡ra*). For contemporary engaged Buddhists, most notably the Dalai Lama, a sense of responsibility rooted in compassion lies at the very heart of an ecological ethic: "The world grows smaller and smaller, more and more interdependent...today more than ever before life must be characterized by a sense of universal responsibility, not only...human to human but also human to other forms of life" (Nancy Nash, "The Buddhist Perception of Nature Project," in *Buddhist Perspectives on the Ecocrisis*, ed. Klas Sandell).

For many Buddhist environmentalists compassion necessarily results from an understanding of all life forms as mutually interdependent. Others argue that a mere cognitive recognition of interdependence is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for an ecological ethic. These critics emphasize the centrality of practice in Buddhism and the tradition's insistence on training in virtue and the threefold path to moral and spiritual excellence--morality, mindful awareness, wisdom. Among contemporary engaged Buddhists, the Vietnamese monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, is the most insistent on the practice of mindful awareness in the development of a peaceful and sustainable world where one perceives the fundamental interconnectedness of life: "*Look deeply*: I arrive in every second/ to be a bud on a spring branch/ to be a tiny bird, with wings still fragile/ learning to sing in my new nest/ to be a caterpillar in the heart of a flower/ to be a jewel hiding itself in a stone/ I am the mayfly metamorphosing on the surface of the river/ and I am the bird which, when spring comes/ arrives in time to eat the mayfly/ I am the child in Uganda, all skin and bones/ my legs as thin as bamboo sticks/ and I am the arms merchant/ selling deadly weapons to Uganda/ I am the 12 year-old girl, refugee on a small boat/ who throws herself into the ocean after being raped by a sea pirate/ and I am the pirate, my heart not yet capable of seeing and loving/ Please call me by my true names/ so I can wake up/ and so the door of my heart can be left open, the door of compassion ("Please Call Me By My True Names")."

Conserving Nature: Doi Suthep Mountain in Northern Thailand

In concluding my remarks I've chosen to relate my experience of a particular place in northern Thailand—Doi Suthep, a sacred mountain in the Chiang Mai valley of northern Thailand—to show that the work of culture and nature are interdependent; that this interdependence is important to the integrity of both, and that it has helped to preserve the natural environment against the pressures of tourism and economic exploitation.

From January through September, 1994, I lived at the foot of Doi Suthep mountain that overlooks Chiang Mai, the country's second largest city, a modern bustling, increasingly crowded metropolis. Everyday I saw the mountain from my study window; observed it on the way to my office at Chiang Mai University; and frequently visited the Buddhist temple at its summit. The face of the mountain constantly changed. In the hot months of March and April the parched hillsides were often veiled in dust and smoke from seasonal burning. With the monsoon rains the mountain emerged from its brown haze with sharp, verdant clarity. At night the temple lights twinkled brightly like stars above the horizon and during the day wispy white clouds often encircled the peak. Doi Suthep proved to be a virtual kaleidoscope of shapes and colors, sights and sounds. The many faces the mountain displayed during the months I was her neighbor became a metaphor for Doi Suthep not only as a natural phenomenon but a symbolic document into which human meanings and ideologies are read.

Rising 1050 meters above sea level, the environs of Doi Suthep were first inhabited by the Lawa, a Mon-Khmer group who lived in the area prior to the major Tai migrations into northern Thailand in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. From the time King Mengrai established Chiang Mai as his capital in 1292, the city has been the dominant power in northern Thailand. Physically the mountain has served as an orientation point for the valley's inhabitants; ecologically its watershed sustained an ever growing population and its forest cover houses an impressive diversity of

flora and fauna that includes over 253 species of orchids, 320 bird and 50 mammal species, and more than 500 species of butterflies. Species of plants and animals new to Thailand and even new to the world are regularly discovered on Doi Suthep. The mountain also figures prominently in the region's rich mythology, and one of the most revered Buddhist sanctuaries in mainland Southeast Asia rests near its summit. A summer palace was built for the country's reigning monarch on Doi Pui, a neighboring peak, and both the temple-monastery, Wat Phrathat Doi Suthep, and the royal palace are within the Doi Suthep-Pui National Park that comprises 162 square kilometers.

Mountains in the Doi Suthep range loom large in the legends and myths of the area. The valley's inhabitants are protected by the guardian spirits of the Lawa, Phu Sae/Ya Sae, who reside on the mountains and who are placated and honored by an annual buffalo sacrifice. An ancient *chedi*(*cetiya*) on Doi Pui's summit is reputed to contain the remains of the Lawa chieftain, Vilangkha. According to legend, he was an unsuccessful suitor of Queen Cama who ruled the Mon city of Haripuñjaya in the ninth century, four hundred years prior to the Tai subjugation of the area led by Mengrai. The mountain takes its name from the legendary hermit sage, Vasudeva, the son of Phu Sae/Ya Sae, a major figure in northern legends and who is linked to the founding of Haripuñjaya. It was Vasudeva who arranged for Cama to come to northern Thailand from Lavapura, modern Lopburi. Devotees continue to make offerings to Vasudeva's spirit at a cave on the mountain's western slope where the ascetic is thought to have lived. Of surpassing historical and cultural significance, however, is Wat Phrathat, the Buddhist temple-monastery near Doi Suthep's summit. Here myth and legend become history. Tradition has it that the sanctuary was established in the fourteenth century to house a Buddha relic brought by the monk, Sumana Thera, from the Thai kingdom of Sukhothai to Chiang Mai at the request of its ruler, Ku'ena (1355-1385). According to the Doi Suthep chronicle, the relic miraculously divided itself. King Ku'ena enshrined half the relic at the royal Flower Garden Monastery (Wat Suan Dok) located in Chiang Mai city. The other half was placed on the back of an elephant to be enshrined wherever the animal was led by the gods, suggesting that supernatural forces determined the location of the Wat. These stories illustrate the rich Lawa, Mon, and Tai cultural map that overlays Doi Suthep's imposing physical topography and around which their histories unfold. As a symbolic document Doi Suthep looms large in the northern Thai cultural imagination and sense of identity.

The contemporary significance of Doi Suthep as a sacred mountain and a work of culture became abundantly clear in 1986 during a controversy over the construction of an electric cable car from the base of the mountain to the monastery-temple, Wat Phrathat, at the summit. The cable car, endorsed by the Tourist Organization of Thailand, would accommodate the ever-increasing number of tourists who flock to Thailand's northern mountains. Long gone are the days when pilgrimage to Wat Phrathat was on foot, but the road to the sanctuary first construed by donated, manual labor under the inspired leadership of the charismatic monk, Khruba Siwichai, has itself become part of the mountain's legendary history. A commercial company building a cable car to promote an increasingly invasive commercial degradation of Doi Suthep was another matter, however. Environmentalists, university professors. students, and ordinary citizens united in protest. A particularly key element in its success was the role played by Buddhist monks, especially the late Bodhirangsi, the assistant ecclesiastical governor of the province of Chiang Mai, and one of the most highly respected abbots in the city. An abbreviated review of the defense of Doi Suthep in the face of the onslaught of commercial development and tourism is the following paragraph from Niranam Khorabhatham's editorial in the April 30, 1986, *Bangkok Post*, which illustrates not only the tenor of the rhetoric but

the reverence for the mountain:

The manager of the propose cable car project on Doi Suthep, Chiang Mai, states that he was 'not overlooking the sanctity of Wat Phrath¡t. He underestimates the northern people: The Soul of Lanna [northern Thailand] is still alive. Northerners perceive, at least in their subconscious, that Mount Suthep is like a symbolic stupa. Doi Suthep's dome-like shape is like an immense replica of the ancient Sanchi style stupa, a gift to Lanna by the Powers of Creation. Stupas are reliquaries of saints. More than that, they are a structural representation of the very essence of Buddhism. Plant and animal life are like Nature's frescoes, both beautifying and exemplifying the Law [*dharma*] not less than paintings in any man-made shrine. Although sometimes not being able to explain why rationally, the northern people want to preserve the Stupa Doi Suthep as it was given to them by Creation, as untouched as possible, as sacred.

The pressures to develop Doi Suthep for its commercial value, especially tourism, threaten the mountain's natural environment and its cultural and religious integrity. The fact that Doi Suthep is perceived by northern Thais as a sacred landscape has been a major factor in challenging the construction of a cable car up the mountain and, more importantly, the expansion of tourism and other commercial enterprises destructive to its natural habitat. The place that Doi Suthep holds in the cultural imagination of northern Thai, the reverence accorded it, and the story of Doi Suthep from its legendary origin to today make a crucial contribution to environmental ethics. Indeed, when it comes to concrete action, as in the case of the cable car project, the place of Doi Suthep in the cultural imagination of the northern Thais and the stories associated with the mountain join past and present, giving purpose and meaning to the lives of contemporary participants in an ongoing narrative.

An environmental ethic depends on the acknowledgement that our intrinsic nature as human beings is inextricably linked to nature, and that human flourishing depends on whether, in Buddhadasa's worlds, "we can listen to the voice of trees, grass, sand, and dirt and hear the sound of the *dharma.*" Our continuing existence and the continuing existence of the planet depends on living this truth.

Buddhism and Ecology: A Virtue Ethics Approach[1]

Prof. Dr. Damien Keown, UK

Introduction

I think it is clear from the extensive secondary literature that Buddhism has a large number of resources to draw on with respect to the environmental problems we face today. Since my own particular interest is in the field of ethics, however, I would like to focus on those features of Buddhist moral teachings that have the potential to ameliorate the crisis. Since everyone recognises that this crisis is global in nature and cannot be solved by Buddhists alone, or indeed by any single group, I would also like to explore a specific set of moral resources available in both East and West which might collectively be brought to bear on the problem. I have in mind those particular qualities or traits of character known as virtues, and I will endeavour to sketch out some points of comparison between traditional Western and Buddhist ethics in this respect.

I take for granted that virtue ethics provides a useful frame of reference for understanding Buddhist moral teachings. Buddhism teaches that human perfection as expressed in the concepts of Buddhood, arhatship, bodhisattvahood, and so forth, is achieved through the lifelong practice of virtues such as wisdom and compassion. I think it is also true that Buddhism would tend to regard today's ecological problems as having a psychological basis, for example as stemming

largely from greed, selfishness, ignorance, and apathy, and as such falling within the sphere of moral psychology. To quote from a recent book by Pragati Sahni:

In all likelihood the early Buddhists would view the environmental crisis as a psychological crisis. They would not blame inferior technological development or poor conservation methods as the cause of the crisis, but bad behaviour and attitudes (greed, hatred and delusion). This can be deduced from the fact that all problems are traced in Buddhism to perverted views, and hence, ultimately to a dysfunctional state of mind.[2]

These dysfunctional psychological states are precisely what virtue ethics seeks to eliminate and so we seem at least to have a common starting point which views the question of the long-term wellbeing of nature as depending not on technology but on human qualities. I am not the only one to have suggested the value of such an approach, and a number of recent publications, including the one just quoted from, have attempted to address environmental questions from the perspective of virtue ethics[3]

Virtue Ethics

Virtue ethics can claim to be the West's oldest systematic body of ethical theory, and it is one that has both secular and religious dimensions. First formulated in the ethical treatises of Aristotle, the tradition was continued by classical Roman authors such as Cicero and then revived by Aquinas in the Middle Ages. Given a Christian interpretation it became the dominant approach to ethics down to the Reformation, only to be rejected along with other religiously-based ethics in the Enlightenment. In the last few decades it has begun to attract attention once again and is being applied in a wide range of contexts. Virtue ethics is an approach which emphasizes the role of the agent more than the action, focussing more on the character of persons than rules (as in deontological ethics) or the consequences of acts (as in consequentialist theories). A key feature of virtue ethics is that it looks at actions in the context of an overall life. The reason for developing particular states of character is to live a balanced and rounded life and to achieve a state of fulfilment, happiness or flourishing.

The classical Western tradition recognized four main or cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude.[4] There is no direct correlation with these virtues in Buddhism, although we find many points of overlap and similarity. Prudence, or the faculty of making wise choices in practical affairs, corresponds broadly to *paññā* (wisdom), although Buddhist sources generally emphasise the theoretical intellect over the practical intellect. There is no specific Buddhist virtue of justice, although this quality is highly praised. Chapter 19 of the *Dhammapada*, for example, is usually translated as 'The Judge,' 'The Just,' 'The Righteous,' or some such term. The Pāli term is *dhammaṭṭha*, meaning 'the man who stands on Dhamma.' Verse 256 tells us that such a man does not make judgements hastily or suddenly (*sahasā*), and that the wise man (*paṇḍita*) is one who investigates both right and wrong (*atthaṃ anatthañca*). The next verse adds that the man who stands on Dhamma, or as we might say, the just man, makes decisions calmly (*asahasena*), in accordance with Dhamma (*dhammena*) and impartially (*samena*).

Buddhism has a good deal to say about the virtue of temperance. References to self-control and self-restraint, abound in Buddhist literature, again, for example, in the *Dhammapada* which speaks repeatedly of the importance of gaining control over the senses. But perhaps it is in the complex of ideas associated with *sīla* that this virtue finds its clearest expression. *Sīla* is the internalised self-

imposed discipline which enables one to ward off temptation and preserve moral purity. It can be contrasted with the externally imposed obligations of the *Vinaya*, although in practice the two will often coincide in their aims and outcome. *Sīla* is said to provide the basis for religious practice and spiritual development just as the earth provides the ground on which plants and seeds can grow and cities can be built. With respect to ecology there is every reason to think that a person who is well-disciplined, self-controlled and restrained will consume less of the earth's resources than a person whose appetites are uncontrolled. A person constrained by *sīla* is less likely to be self-indulgent and will be better equipped to resist the inducements of consumerism to accumulate more and more possessions. It goes without saying that a nation which practised *sīla* would have very different patterns of consumption to one that did not.

Given its association with self-control and self-discipline, *sīla* seems also to overlap with the fourth Western virtue of fortitude, which means standing firm in the face of adversity. There is also a more specific virtue, that of *viriya* or v*īrya*, which becomes famous as the fourth of the six perfections (*pāramitās*) of a bodhisattva. *Viriya,* in its most basic sense, is the virtue of a brave person, a hero who displays courage and does not flinch in the face of danger. More generally it connotes resolution and firmness of purpose in the projects to which one commits oneself. It is clear that projects of the kind undertaken by ecologists, which are often on a planetary scale, require a good degree of fortitude since there are likely to be setbacks at every stage. Projects such as reducing global emissions of CO^2 require years of planning, negotiation and education, and even then it is not an easy matter to reach agreement and meet targets.

It is not my intention to suggest that Western virtues can be mapped directly onto Buddhist ones, or vice versa. Indeed, we should not be surprised if different cultures recognise or give prominence to different virtues. Buddhism, for example, recognises virtues that are not much emphasised in the Western tradition, such as mindfulness (*sati*), a virtue that can have an important bearing on ecology. The objective of a comparative study of this kind is limited to showing that comparable tools exist within different traditions with which to tackle today's global challenge.

Virtue Ethics and Ecology

Although virtue ethics has made a contribution to many areas of applied ethics in the West, it has so far not been developed very far with respect to ecology. Perhaps this is because the virtues are linked to an ancient system of morality and therefore thought incapable of responding to what is essentially a modern challenge. How, then, might an ecology based on the virtues be constructed? Thomas E.Hill Jr was one of the first writers to propose an environmental ethics based on the virtues. He made reference to certain human ideals that were needed if natural environments were to be preserved and identified certain virtues as having particular relevance to the environment. In particular he linked humility, gratitude and self-acceptance with care for and an appreciation of nature.

Hill gives particular emphasis to the virtue of humility, which suggests an interesting connection with certain qualities Buddhists are encouraged to develop, such as a sense of modesty and shame encompassed by the terms *hiri* and *ottappa*, factors which restrain inappropriate behaviour and encourage a sense of proper decorum. Egocentricity (*ahaṃkara*) and pride (*māna*) are frequently criticized. Indeed according to the *Aggañña Sutta* it was due to a sense of pride and conceit (*mānātimāna*) with respect to their appearance that matter appeared and was consumed by the ethereal survivors of the preceding cosmic destruction.

Geoffrey Frasz seeks to refine Hill's concept of humility by insisting that it be measured or appropriate to the context. He renames this virtue 'openness' and regards it as the mean between arrogance (too little humility) and false modesty (too much humility). Although there is no precise Buddhist virtue corresponding to openness, it seems to involve an attitude similar to those expressed in the *Brahma-vihāras* of love (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), gladness (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*). In addition to their inwardly transforming effect, these attitudes have an open and other-directed quality about them in their emphasis on caring, compassion and love for others. They call for a positive disposition towards all beings, oneself included, and affirm self-worth while restraining arrogance.

It also seems likely that the wellbeing of the environment will be promoted by the constant emphasis on simple living and contentment found in Buddhist literature. Non-greed (*arāga*) and contentment with what one has (*santuṣṭi*) seem to be foundational virtues which support ecological concern. Keeping material needs to a minimum and limiting possessions to a robe and bowl, food for a day, simple lodgings and medicine are practices which consume the minimum natural resources. By contrast luxury items such as high beds, garlands and adornments, were discouraged.

A further important virtue to be considered in the context of ecology is *ahiṃsā*, which means non-harming or non-violence.[5] This virtue will have a special bearing on the lifestyle people adopt and the potential it has for causing harm to human beings, animals, and inanimate nature.

Anthropocentrisism v Biocentricism

However, approaching ecology primarily through the virtues is not without its problems. One possible reason why virtue ethics has not so far been popular with ecologists may be that since it concerns above all human subjects, it is thought too anthropocentric to make a contribution to an area in which human beings are regarded as the problem rather than the solution. Rather than an ethics centred on the human subject, contemporary environmental ethics has tended to adopt a biocentric approach in which all living creatures, and even inanimate nature itself, are seen as having inherent worth and interests which rival those of human beings.[6] The best example of this is James Lovelock's theory of Gaia[7] which sees the world as an organic whole in which all the species on the planet act in concert to produce ecological equilibrium. Various 'new age' readings of the Gaia hypothesis seek to attribute personality to Gaia as an earth goddess presiding over a resacralized nature. If nature is regarded as a moral agent in this way it is problematic how moral virtues might be applicable to her (or its) behaviour. The conventional understanding among traditional virtue ethicists is that moral agency is a faculty exercised only by human beings. So, does the fact that only human beings (and possibly a limited class of animal species) can exercise moral agency condemn virtue ethics to an anthropocentric or 'speciesist' position? Certainly there are some ecologists who will see this human-centred aspect as a defect, but the virtue ethicist can respond that the starting point for resolving environmental problems has to be our own human nature, pointing out that unless we put our own house in order first we are not likely to have much success in fixing up the rest of the planet. A critical look at ourselves, our values, habits and lifestyles, is surely advisable. Since humans are allegedly the culprits of many ecological problems such as climate change, water pollution, deforestation, desertification and the general mismanagement of resources, the solution would appear to lie in a reform of human attitudes rather than in constructing what are often romanticised philosophies of nature. To start from theories about the biosphere and make ecology the basis of ethics, moreover, seems to be putting the cart before the horse: what is required first is an ethical

foundation upon which sound ecological practice can be based. Virtue ethics places human beings at the centre of the ecological drama but it does not follow from this that it maintains that only the interests of human beings need to be considered. It is certainly capable of affirming the value of nature while recognizing that it is other than human.

An ancient concept in virtue ethics is that of the 'common good.' This holds that the well-being and flourishing of individuals can only be achieved in community, and that there is a reciprocal relationship between the two whereby each enhances the good of the other. From here it is only a short step to the view that the flourishing all living things needs to be promoted because it is constitutive of our own flourishing.[8] This is somewhat different to the traditional Christian view in terms of which man is the steward of the natural order, since it does not assess the worth of creatures simply in terms of their worth for human beings. In this scheme each creature is allowed its own place, and the distinctiveness of human beings is simply that they can sometimes glimpse the whole picture. As Stephen Clark writes:

Those who would live virtuously, tradition tells us, must seek to allow each creature its own place, and to appreciate the beauty of the whole. It is because human beings can sometimes come to see that whole, and know their own place in it, that—in a sense—they are superior to other forms. Our 'superiority', insofar as that is real, rests not upon our self-claimed right always to have more than other creatures do ... but on the possibility that we may (and the corresponding duty that we should) allow our fellow creatures their part of the action.[9]

This distinction between human beings and other species is not based on any notion of hierarchical superiority but at the same time recognises there is a difference between humans and other creatures. Animals can thus be included in the moral community but not on the basis of being moral agents in the way human beings are.

Animals are part of the biotic community in which all living creatures share, and so their interests cannot be excluded from considerations of the common good. Since humans have a clearer perception of this good than other species it could be said that they have a duty or at least a responsibility to consider the wellbeing of animals in deliberations which may affect them. Thus we still retain a sense of the distinctiveness of human nature and of its unique identity in the context of the uniqueness of other species. Something of this kind seems to be intended by the phrase 'a precious human rebirth' found particularly in Tibetan sources, and foreshadowed by earlier illustrations in Buddhist literature of how difficult it is to gain a human rebirth.[10] Of course, many Buddhists will disagree with the anthropocentric tone of the discussion at this point and insist that animals and perhaps even inanimate nature be given equivalent moral standing with human beings. I can only respond that the notion of leaves and trees attaining enlightenment, as Chan-jan envisaged,[11] is not one that virtue ethics would find easy to accommodate.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by summarising some of the reasons why a virtue ethics approach seems to offer a basis for a Buddhist ecological ethics. The first reason is because it is grounded in the practice and tradition of Buddhist itself. One only needs to read the *Dhammapada* to see that the Buddhist ideal of human perfection is defined in terms of the virtues exercised by an individual who treats all beings with kindness

and compassion, lives honestly and righteously, controls sensual desires, speaks the truth and lives a sober upright life, diligently fulfilling his duties, such as service to parents, to his immediate family and to those recluses and brahmans who depend on the laity for their maintenance.

A Buddhist ecology, then, coincides with these teachings and simply calls for the orientation of traditional virtues towards a new set of problems concerned with the environment. If we require a concrete illustration of how a virtuous person might act towards the environment we can turn to the example of the Buddha. The Buddha is never depicted harming nature and on the contrary seems to have enjoyed spending time in simple natural environments such *āvāsas* and *ārāmas*. Causing harm to animals or to nature seems inconceivable in his case, and we cannot help but feel it would be totally *out of character* for him, which is precisely the state an ecological virtue ethics would seek to engender in us all.

Even being enlightened, however, does not bring the power to solve ecological problems: since no-one has a crystal ball to see into the future, the virtues cannot always tell us what it would be best to do in every situation. What the virtues *can* do is guide us in grasping the issues at stake and in accepting or rejecting possible courses of action under consideration. The virtues would encourage us to understand clearly the nature of the problem, listen carefully to the views of others, meditate and reflect deeply and insightfully on the alternatives and their pros and cons, reach a resolution, and act with integrity in the execution of the course of action decided. As Frasz writes, 'the thrust of environmental virtue ethics is to foster new habits of thought and action in the moral agent—not just to get the immediate decision made right, but to reorient all actions henceforth in terms of holistic, ecologically based ways of thinking.'[12]

Notes

1 This paper is adapted from my article 'Buddhism and ecology: A virtue ethics approach,' *Contemporary Buddhism*, 2007. 8(2):97 - 112.

2 Sahni P. *Environmental Ethics in Early Buddhism: A Virtues Approach*. Routledge, 2007, p.13.

3 See *Cooper, D.E. and S.P. James,* Buddhism, virtue and environment. Ashgate world philosophies series. 2005, Aldershot; Ashgate. James, S.P., *Zen Buddhism and environmental ethics*. Ashgate world philosophies series. 2004, Aldershot: Ashgate.

4 To these, Christianity added three more, the so-called 'theological virtues' of faith, hope, and charity.

5 As Schmithausen has pointed out, many of the virtues such as *ahiṃsā* and *mettā* were directed towards individuals rather than species or eco-systems, which suggests that their original inspiration was non-ecological. However, this does not preclude these virtues taking on an ecological dimension now even if they have not done so far.

6 Buddhist virtue ethics has, according to Whitehill, an advantage over its Western counterpart in being both biocentric and ecological. In Buddhist thought, he suggests, membership of the moral community extends beyond the human species, although I suggest below that its scope is not as broad as some imagine. See Whitehill J. 'Buddhism and the Virtues.' In: Keown D, ed. *Contemporary Buddhist Ethics*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000: 17-36.

7 Lovelock J. *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth*. Second ed. Oxford: OUP, 1987.

8 Celia E.Deane-Drummond *The Ethics of Nature*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004, p.42.

9 Quoted in Celia E.Deane-Drummond *The Ethics of Nature*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004: 66.

10 E.g. S.v.475; S.ii.263; A.i.35; M.iii.169. See Harvey P. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics: Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000:.29f.

11 See Lafleur W. 'Enlightenment for Plants and Trees' in Kaza S, Kraft K. *Dharma Rain : sources of Buddhist environmentalism*. 1st ed. Boston, Mass.: Shambhala Publications, 2000:109-116.

12 Quoted in Sahni P. *Environmental Ethics in Early Buddhism: A Virtues Approach*. Routledge, 2007, p.214.

Paṭiccasamppāda and Enviromental Preservation

Venerable Dr. Thich Tam Duc, Vietnam

Our Earth, in which environment is now increasingly polluted, is sending an SOS asking for help from humanity! As one of great religions in the world, What can Buddhism do for it?

Nowadays, people world-wide are worried about the current environment problems including 10 issues as follows:

The expanding of the hole in the ozone layer.

Global climate change.

Population explosion.

Depletion of forest resources.

The pollution of marine and ocean.

Depletion of freshwater resources.

Soil pollution and desertification phenomenon.

Biodiversity decline.

The depletion of mineral resources.

The increased waste.

Out of the ten issues mentioned-above, climate change is the most worrying problem today.

Climate change has been a hot issue at the most. It's not just environmental issue but also issue of development, attracting the attention of many countries, many scientists, many managers and politicians in the world. Kofi Annan considers climate change as a threat to peace and global security, there is the danger level on a par with other armed conflict, arms trafficking or poverty.

Climate change seriously threatens the vital interests of many nations, many countries around the planet, including Vietnam. The most obvious manifestations is unusual weather phenomena, the earth is heating up, and consequently to an increase of ice melts, sea level rise, flood, cyclones, storms. People have faced the unpredictable effects of climate change such as disease, poverty, loss of accomodation, lack of arable land, the loss of biodiversity..... The Human Development Report 2007-2008 of the UN Development Program (UNDP) said: Climate change caused five human setbacks: 1) Climate will affect rainfall, temperature and water used for agriculture. In 2008, the world will add about 600 million people to malnutrition, 2) To 2008, there will be about 1.8 billion people living in water scarcity, especially in North China, the Middle East, South America and North Asia. 3) Approximately 330 million people will be displaced temporarily or permanently by flooding if the Earth's temperature increased by 3°C – 4°C. 4) Rate of species extinction will rise if warming temperatures around 2°C. 5) The deadly disease will spread. There may be additional 400 million people with malaria.

The monitoring data shows Earth's temperature rise to 1°C from 1920 to 2005. 2035 Forecast Earth's temperature will increase by 2°C and the twenty-first century will increase from 1.4°C – 4°C. Earth's surface temperature increase will make ice melt and sea level rise. As a result, many areas of abundant food production, populated areas, large plain, low islands on earth can be submersed in water. According to the UNDP, Vietnam is among the top 5 of the world's leading and most vulnerable to damage directly due to climate change: if the sea level rises 1 meter, Vietnam would be taken off 5% of land, about 11% of the population lost their homes, reduce agricultural output by 7% and 10% national income, nearly 50% of agricultural land. Cuu Long River Delta would be submerged and no longer a cultivation land. Red River Delta and all the people living along the coast 3.200km would be also greatly affected. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment summarized for about ten years, Vietnam has suffered major impacts of climate change, as evidenced by the extreme weather phenomena: natural disasters occur continuously, in increase in strength, size and strength, causing great losses of life and property. In 2006 alone, the damage caused by storms in Vietnam up to $ 1.2 billion. In particular, in the winter of 2007-2008 the cold weather lasting 38 days has killed more than 53.000 cattle and harm about 34.000 hectares of transplanted spring rice, and tens of thousands of hectares of mountain-clad rice seeds in all the northern and North Central have been lost. Damage estimated at more than 11.600 billion VND, and over 723.900 times of households and 3.000.000 mouths fall into starvation. The bird flu, blue ear pig disease outbreak... has repeated and persisted in many places.

Scientists confirm that the direct cause of climate change is caused by excessive emission of greenhouse gases, especially CO2 from the burning of an unprecedented volume of fossil fuels like coat, oil and gas in the process of industrial development. Deforestation and unsustainable logging also causes more than 20% of greenhouse gas emission globally. Some forms of farming, husbandry, transport, habits of using non-renewable fuels and other forest products have significantly increased greenhouse gas emissions, making the warming temperatures, and consequently to the creation of climate change on global.

Before the risk of global climate change, mainly due to human activities, at the Summit on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janero, Brazil in 1992, the Nations around the world adopted the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. By 1997, States have agreed through the Kyoto Protocol on cutting greenhouse gas emissions. To date, 165 countries have ratified this Protocol, including Vietnam. This commitment clearly stated that all parties signing the Protocol have to comply with a number of steps including: Design and implement programs to minimize and adapt to climate change. Prepare a national statistics on removal by reducing carbon emissions. Encourage technology transfer climate-friendly. Promote collaboration in research and observations of climate change, impacts and response strategies.

Recently, on April 9, 2012 the UN warned of severe weather events, which are happening more frequently around the globe[1]: United Nations launched a special report on the handling of the risk of extreme weather events and disasters to accelerate adaptation to climate change (SREX), which warned of that this fact will increase in four decades with more intense rainfall in the tropics and high latitudes. The "record" severe weather events are increasing in number and extremes due to heat and humidity of environment because humanity continues to burn billions of tons of fossil fuels[2].

For sustainable development, in planning economic and social development of immediate and long-term of the nation and regions, we must soon raise the issue of global climate change as an important factor to consider seriously. It should be noted on mitigation, prevention and adaptation.

In order to address pressing issues mentioned-above, the conference: "Global climate change and adaptation measures in Vietnam" was held in February 2008 and set out some measures to minimize the impact of climate change as follows:

Improving performance and approval of projects and activities aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Assessing the forest cover in terms of carbon absorption and trade.

Building capacity to regulate, manage and promote the carbon market.

Building capacity of studying emissions.

Reviewing the objective of greenhouse gas emissions.

Changing the behavior of consumers on reducing carbon consumption, in private and industry sector.

Clearly, climate change is a cause but also an effect in the interaction between environment with humanity.

In Buddhism, *Paṭiccasamuppāda* or the law of cause and effect which was discovered by Monk *Gotama* just before his getting enlightenment to become a Buddha. A short of the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* is as follows: "This exists, that exists; This arises, that arises. This doesn't exist,

1 www.moitruong.com.vn/Home/Default.aspx?portalid=33&tabid=19&distid=4089

2 The most dangerous man-made gases for human health and the Earth's atmosphere have been known as follows: carbon dioxide (CO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2); Carbon monoxide (CO); Nitrogen Oxide (N_2O); Clorofluorocarbon (also known as CFCs) and Methane (CH_4).

Typically, the amount of CO_2 produced naturally balanced with the amount of CO_2 is used for photosynthesis. Two types of human activities that burn fossil fuels and deforestation have made the above process imbalances, have adverse impacts on global climate

that doesn't exist; this doesn't arise; that doesn't arise"[3]. And the Buddha did warn of the unlimited craving of human, saying: a) This unstable world is brought to an end, b) This world is no refuge, no guard, c) This world is not one's own, one must go leaving everything, and d) This world lacks and is unsatisfied, a slave to craving.[4]

According to *Paṭiccasamuppāda*, a human being cannot live alone but live with surroundings or environment. He should be wisely in the interaction between him and environment, so that both develop together. This should not harm that and that should not harm this. If this principle is broken, imbalance or unsustainability will occur. However, the first element to break it is from humanity![5] And it is certainly worth in terms of environmental preservation (as suggestions) when the Buddha gave advice to monks:

"to abandon killing, to abstain from killing… to feel sympathy for / to be concerned about the wefare of living and sentient beings".[6]

"to make no harm to seeds and species of plants."[7]

"to be pleased with the minimum necessities on robe to cover body, on food to feed stomach".[8]

"not to receive raw seeds, not to receive raw meat".[9]

"to abstain from adorning with garland, aromatic spices and fashions. To abstain from using high beds, big beds. To abstain from receiving gold, silver."[10]

To apply the Buddha's advice on environmental preservation or nature protection, monks need to increase the awareness of lay Buddhists about climate change through media campaigns or lectures on *Dhamma*, public information and education to change community behavior. Protect the green lung of the human race by greening hills, against the deforestation. Preserve, restore and develop mangrove forests. Build and reinforce the dike systems to prevent the phenomenon of rising sea levels. Encourage to use clean energy sources like solar, wind, hydro,...Transfer and apply of advanced technologies for environment friendly. And, especially, strengthen the international cooperation in the global activities of environment preservation.

In short, although the Buddha's advice or his discovery of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* has been long ago, all of His instructions remain useful in the strategy of global environment preservation at the present time. All of us should be united, and try to keep our planet blue (of sea), green (of mountains) and compassionate (of human hearts) from extinction before it's too late!

3 *Majjhima Nikāya*, "Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhāyasuttaṃ," Trans. Thich Minh Chau, Vol. I, Saigon: Van Hanh University, 1973. Imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imass'uppādā idaṃ uppajjati (p.262-3); Imasmiṃ asati idaṃ na hoti, imassa nirodhā idaṃ nirujjhati (p. 264).

4 *Majjhima Nikāya*, "Raṭṭhapālasuttaṃ," Trans. Thich Minh Chau, Vol. II, Saigon: Van Hanh University, 1974, p. 68. a) 'Upanīyati loko addhuvo ti'; b) 'Attāṇo loko anabhissaro ti'; c) 'Assako loko sabbaṃ pahāya gamanīyan ti'; d) 'Uno loko atitto taṇhādāso ti'.

5 The ecological environment is a network can adjust the relationship between closely with land, water, air and living organisms in the global scope. Disruption of instability at a certain stage in the system will cause serious consequences. People and society comes from nature, are part of nature. Through the process of labor, human has accrued to nature from exploiting and protecting it. Also through the process that human society has gradually opposed to nature.

6 So…pāṇātipātaṃ pahāya pāṇātipātā paṭivirato hoti….sabbapāṇabhūtahitānukampī. *Opcit*. Vol. I, p. 267.

7 So bījagāmabhūtagāmasamāramohā paṭivirato hoti. *Opcit*. Vol. I, p. 268.

8 So santuṭṭho hoti kāyaparihārikena cīvarena kucchiparihaarikena piṇḍapātena. *Ibid*.

9 Āmakadhaññapaṭiggahaṇā paṭivirato hoti. Āmakamaṃsapaṭiggahaṇā pa□ivirato hoti. *Ibid*.

10 Māla-gandha-vilepana-dhāraṇa-maṇḍana-vibhūsanaṭṭhānā paṭivirato hoti. Uccāsayana-mahā-sayanā paṭivirato hoti. Jātarūparajatapaṭiggahaṇā paṭvirato hoti. *Ibid.*

Buddhist Wisdom and Environment: Viewed from Ecosystem Relationship

Prof. Dr. Chamnong Adivadhanasit, Thailand

Abstract

This article aims at presenting the Buddhist interpretation of an environment, the relationship between man and the environment, the value of the environment and the Buddhist approach to tackle the environmental problems as well as the Buddhist guidelines for conserving and maintaining the existing and healthy environment. In the Buddhist perspectives, the concept of the environment encompasses both human society and natural surroundings. To maintain a balanced existence of the world ecosystem, human society and its natural surroundings should be equally treated, by not emphasizing one over another. The environment of all aspects gives mankind life survival, spiritual pleasure and true wisdom. Man should develop positive attitude towards the environment, appreciate its value and treat it with loving kindness. The Buddhist monks in Thailand might be presented as an admirable example in undertaking the environmental improvement to a very large extent.

The Buddhist Interpretation of the Environment

In Buddhist view, the environment means everything surrounding us, embracing both biotic and non-biotic entities or living and non-living beings, either man-made objects or naturally existing resources. Buddhism gives a significant status to the environment and

treats it as both a true friend and a dangerous foe or destroyer in case one associates himself with a bad environment. This means that in the Buddhist perspectives, there are both good environments (Kalyanamitta) and bad environments (Akalyanamitta). If one associates himself continuously with a good environment as with a good friend, one could benefit a fruitful and wholesome thing in return. The good and friendly environment always leads to a good benefit. In contrast, if one associates himself with a bad and unwholesome environment, he could be led to a bad consequence and might be socialized to be a bad member of the community.

The Relationship between Man and the Environment

The existing relationship between man and the environment may be considered as follows.

Man considers himself as friend to the environment. The friendly relationship between man and the environment will help in growing a positive gesture on man towards the natural environment. Man will develop a friendly spirit to the environment, trying to protect and consume it to exist without its being destroyed. The Buddha has taught us to cultivate a friendly attitude towards the environment as the environment is of great contributions to man. So man should be grateful to the nature. The spirit of gratitude is one of the important characteristics of a good man.

A great number of men in this world consider the environmental resources as their belongings, enabling them thereby to possess the exclusive right to exploit the environmental resources with no consideration of the natural right to exist and maintain its existence. The possessive relationship of the natural and social environment on man's part has been existing since the ancient times as we can witness from historical data and evidences, especially with reference to the natural resources depletion throughout the world. The possessive attitude leads to the destruction of the environment and social conflicts generated by the emphasis on economic development through man industrial production by which huge natural resources are exploited. A strong stream of industrialism is the key influential factor responsible for the non-stop natural resource devastation world-wide. To conclude the fact, man's egoistic aspiration is the main driving force leading to a vast exploitation of the natural resources. And this egoistic force has brought about the conflicts among mankind, causing a great trouble to man and his environments.

A chain-of-food relationship is another form that can be referred to in this discussion. Man and the natural environment have been since their evolution playing the roles of both producer and consumers and both helpers and destroyers. But in the final stage, man will be conquered and composed by nature. Man is one of the living organism categories, surviving by means of food as produced and supplied by the nature. The fact here is that throughout history of the natural environment, man seems to have been a major consumer, producing very little food element for other living organism in the natural environment. This kind of relationship can be viewed as a substantial factor responsible for the extinction of a great number of living species. As a matter of fact, this symbiotic relationship between man and the environment exists amid chaos. In certain world communities, there has been a continuing struggle for their members' survival, but their struggle seems to be of no fruit as they have been denied of their right to survive by some other stronger communities who always claim their rights on behalf of other living species to survive over the right of man in those communities, by laying laws and regulations to control man and imposing the punishment over the encroaching man. This treatment seems to be unfair to man from the humanistic point of view, but in contrast, it seems fair as from the point of view of the ecosystem principle.

The Value of the Environment

From the Buddhist perspectives, the environment contributes a great benefit to man and other species living therein.

The survival of all the biotic components of the environment has been made possible so far through a kind and mutual co-operative supply of food and other necessaries, by other biotic and non-biotic components. For instance, man has been surviving thousands and thousands of years out of food and other needed ingredients of life substance as wholly supplied by the nature. With a particular reference to man, both social and natural environment contributes greatly to his survival.

According to the Buddhist theory, our life is composed of five elements: corporeality, sensation, perception, mental formations and consciousness; and in brief these elements of life are material and non-material or the body and the mind. The mind is the leading element of our life. A true life is meaningfully a pleasant and merry mind. And nothing can make man be pleasant better than pure, fresh and friendly environment (Kalyanamitta). The Kalyanamitta environment unendingly enlivens man's spirit. In this consequence, the environment is of a great value to man's emotion, is of a great value to man's emotion, navigating man to have a positive attitude towards all things, living and non-living around him.

The environment acts as a great teacher of man. If we observe everything surrounding our life carefully and systematically and continuously, we can definitely obtain some true knowledge. Many great world's famous learners have come to the realization of truthful knowledge and low of cause and effect through a systematic and continuous observation. We cannot deny that our knowledge is the result of our systematic searching for the truth out of the environmental phenomena. Our great Master, Lord Buddha, during the period of His searching for the supreme and ultimate truth, had gone and studied with His Gurus or Masters in the forest; and finally, he attained the enlightenment under the support of the nature environment must have had a great deal of effect on the Lord Buddha's mind since he was born in the Royal national park, had been studying in the forest and attained the Buddhahood under the Bodi tree by the Veranjya River bank. It can be said with no doubt that most of the Buddha's life time had been spent in the natural forest and royal park and eventually before His Prinibbana, Lord Buddha had chosen the Sala forest as the place for His passing away. This might be the reason that this Vesak Day has been officially upheld by the royal government of Thailand as the National Day of the Trees.

Some Buddhist Guidelines for Tackling the Environment Problems and for Conserving and Keeping the Environment Healthy

The Buddha Himself paid a great respect of the Dhamma and taught his followers to respect he Dhamma after His passing away. The Dhamma can be interpreted as the rule of nature or the laws of the environment. The Buddhist Dhamma covers a vast and deep range of the environmental phenomena, having been categorized as, theories (Pariyatti), applications (Patipatti) and desirable goals (Pativatha). The Buddhist Dhamma explains the fact about evolution, existence and change of all the phenomena which are subjected to impermanence, suffering and no-real self. This explanation is an example of the Dhamma on the theoretical notation of the phenomena.

The environment, especially natural environment is now faced with the state of destructiveness, mainly caused by man's over consumption, overinvestment, over exploitation of natural

resources, over emphasis on material economic growth, over stocking of raw materials and industrial products and world population explosion. These causal problems have popped up as an array of diseases battling over our life simultaneously.

From the Buddhist perspectives, these problems must be tackled by a tripartite cooperation approach government, private sector including the non-government organizations (NGOs) and Buddhist-centered community. The triple party must act together, respecting each other, cooperating with each other and recognizing mutual identities and role performance. The government or any other single party cannot succeed in resolving the environmental problems and in keeping the environment healthy. Each party must love each other, have a mutual confidence and respect the dignity of each other and finally paying a great and true Pucha to Lord Buddha by growing trees in all the treeless areas. Doing this kind of practice can be regarded as a true Buddhist and a true Pucha of Lord Buddha, one of the greatest world's spiritual leader who still continues in man memories and respect up to the present time, in history of the world's religion.

Speakers on

The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-being of Humanity

Symposium Session 3: Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation

Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation

Ven. Prof. Dr. Yuan Ci, China

The Buddhist wisdom has in the human history demonstrated itself that it can lead the bad to become the good, the low to the lofty, the better to the best, the worldly to the holy. One may rise

the question as how Buddhist wisdom has contributed human

transformation in China. To respond this, we found a Book containing better answers. It is the Book entitled ***The Chinese National Culture in Twenty-Five Lessons For the Leaders In China***. It has been considered as authority book in China as it was edited and published by the Central Party School Publishing House. The book has shown that since the Buddhist wisdom was officially introduced into China, most Chinese emperors were supporting Buddhism, and they with the Buddhist wisdom well developed and governed their country.

Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation

Senior Prof. Sumanapala Galmangoda, Sri Lanka

Buddhist wisdom Pa~~a (P@li), Praj~@ (Sanskrit) differs from other kinds of wisdom indicated by the terms such as "understanding", ''knowledge", "insight", and "intellect". So, Ven. Buddhaghosa, the celebrated commentator on the Pali canon, defines " Pa~~a" in Buddhist context as follows:

"The understanding consisting in insight knowledge associated with profitable consciousness"[1]

Further he explains that this particular mode of understanding is different from other modes of perceiving (sa~j@nana) and cognizing (vij@nana). Although the state of knowing is equally present in perception (sa~~a), consciousness (vi~~@%a) and understanding (pa~~a) the pa~~a can alone penetrate into the real nature of things - impermanence (anicca), unsatisfactoriness (anicca) and non-self (anatta).[2]

According to the traditional fourfold method of definition

The specific characteristic of pa~~a is penetrating the own-nature of states (lakka%a)

Its function is to destroy the darkness of ignorance which conceals the real nature of states (rasa)

Its manifestation is non-delusion (paccup{{h@na)

Its proximate cause is concentration (pada{{h@na) [3]

There are some specific subjects prescribed in the discourses as well as in Abhidhamma to penetrate through pa~~a which are designated as states (dhamm@) related to the real nature of the world of experience. They represent almost all the basic teachings of Buddhism and the following are the most important doctrines considered as the soil in which pa~~a grows:

Five aggregates (khandha)

Twelve bases (@yatana)

Eighteen elements (dh@tu)

Faculties (indriya)

Truths (sacca)

Dependent co-origination (pa{iccasamupp@da)[4]

Pa~~a when compared with a tree, it is rooted in the soil represented by the above doctrines. Its roots are similar to the purity of moral behavior and the purity of mind. Its trunk is compared with the purities of views, doubts, path and non-path, practice and insight knowledge.[5]

The above mentioned factors refer to the three stages of the Buddhist path - morality (purity of moral behavior), concentration (purity of mind), and wisdom (other five kinds of purity). As a result of the development of pa~~a one can attain the four paths and four fruits which lead to the realization of Nibb@%a, the final aim of Buddhism.

A tree cannot be fully identified separated from its ground (soil), roots and trunk. They are mutually inter-dependant. Similarly the three stages of Buddhist path leading to nibb@%a cannot be separated one from the other. Due to this reason in many discourses these three kinds of training (tisikkh@) are qualified with the term anupubba - gradual.[6]

Our main subject pa~~a also cannot be explained separated from the other two factors namely morality (s$la) and concentration (sam@dhi). These three stages of the Buddhist path refer to three kinds of transformation in human personality:

behavioral transformation (s$la)

mental (psychological)

transformation (sam@dhi)

intellectual (cognitive)

transformation (pa~~@)

Human personality is analyzed as five aggregates, twelve bases and eighteen elements etc. in a number of discourses. Among such analyses the most popular analysis is the teaching of the five aggregates. It also covers all other analyses related to physical and mental aspects of human personality.

i. r#pa - physical body consisting of the five senses and their respective objects in the external world.

ii. vedan@ - feelings that arise as a result of the contact between the senses, sense-objects and the consciousness.

iii. sa~~@ - perceptions or memories of those feelings registered in the mind for later reflection and to create similar feelings.

iv. sa<kh@ra - Dispositions or concepts constructed in regard to feelings as a result of constant reflection over the memories.

v. vi~~@%a - consciousness, personality, soul or I-ness developed as a totality of the above mentioned four aggregates.[7]

Now two factors are very clear:

i. three kinds of transformation: moral, mental and intellectual

ii. human personality: physical body, feelings, perceptions, dispositions, consciousness

In a large number of modern works these two factors have been analyzed, explained and described individually. But I have not seen any work where these three stages of training explained in connection with the five aggregates of human personality. My considered opinion regarding this point is given below in brief:

Ven. Buddhagosa gives five similes in order to clarify the real nature of five aggregates of clinging (pa~cup@d@nakkhandha).

r#pa - matter (physical body): sick-room (hospital)

vedan@ - feelings: sickness

sa~~@ - perceptions: arising of the sickness

sa<kh@ra - dispositions: taking unsuitable foods, etc. to increase the sickness

vi~~@%a - consciousness: sick man[8]

The sick man (consciousness) dwells in the hospital (body), he has a sickness (feelings, enjoyment), the sickness arises (as a result of seeking after the feelings again and again keeping them as memories or perceptions) the sickness increases as a result of reflection over the memories and creating wrong concepts (dispositions, formations) over them and taking them as essential for life, all these are done by the sick man which is the consciousness, the collective concept of I-ness.

The three kinds of transformation mentioned above can be applied to the five aggregates as follows:

r#pa - behavioral transformation by moral training (s$la)
mental transformation by
concentration (sam@dhi)

vedan@

sa~~@
intellectual or cognitive transformation by
wisdom (pa~~a)

sa<kh@ra

vi~~@%a

Physical behavior of man directly affects the mental behavior. So, physical behavior namely bodily functions and verbal actions should be restrained by observing moral rules in order to prepare a good ground for mental training. According to the methods of samatha meditation in the first trance five mental qualities are produced. Human mind has two main aspects - emotional and intellectual. Among the five jh@nic factors the first two initial application (vitakka) and investigation (vic@ra) refer to the intellectual aspect and zest (p$ti) and happiness (sukha) refer to emotional aspect. Almost all the meditational subjects related to jh@na of samatha are closely connected with the aggregates of feeling and perception. So, concentration is mainly applied to train and calm down the aggregates of feeling and perception.

Dispositions (concepts) and consciousness (I-ness) are developed through the intellectual process and they should be eliminated by wisdom or insight meditation, through understanding the impermanent, unsatisfactory and essenceless nature of such concepts.

In brief, we can understand that Buddhism explains a path leading to a transformation of human personality by means of wisdom (pa~~a) based on morality and concentration. The saints who have attained this transformation are like the lotus flowers grown in a muddy place. They live in the world but not attached to it. They are fully emancipated and they will never be reborn again. They show the path leading to the cessation of suffering (nirodha) which is the only way for obtaining an eternal happiness. The liberated beings are human beings but they are extra-ordinary human beings (acchariyamanuss@) because they have fully transformed their personality in regard to five aggregates. Ordinary beings possess five grasping groups (pa~cup@d@nakkhandha) but liberated saints (arhants) possess only five aggregates without clinging (up@d@na). Such beings are the torch-bearers of mankind (ukk@dh@ra) because of whom people can develop wisdom (pa~~@) in order to dispel the darkness of ignorance, the foundation of all problems in human life.

End Notes

1 The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) tr. Bhikkhu Ñ@%amoli, Taiwan, 1956, p. 479

2 op. cit. , p. 480

3 op. cit. , p. 481

4 op. cit. , p. 592

5 op. cit. , p. 488

6 G. D. Sumanapala, An Introduction to Therav@da Abhidhamma, Singapore, 1998, pp. 153-155

7 G. D. Sumanapala, Abhidhammic Interpretation of Early Buddhist Teachings, Singapore, 2005, pp. 8-23; Sumanapala Galmangoda, Reality and Expression, Sri Lanka, 2008, pp. 44-45

8 The Path of Purification, op. cit. , p. 544

Tracing Transformation to the 2,600 Years Old Dharma Wheel: A Brief Reflection on the Impact of the Buddha's First Sermon

Venerable Dr. Khammai Dhammasami, UK

The Buddha made it clear from the beginning that all his efforts would be devoted to reducing the problems, inherent or otherwise, faced by living beings including humanity. Human problems have been his focus and indeed the source of his enlightenment. With his vast experiences accumulated through his journey in search of solution to suffering, he looked at predicaments that human beings faced in daily life; that was 2600 years ago under the Bodhi Tree at Boddhagaya and with renewed determination and right attitude. That was how he attained enlightenment through his own efforts.

All the Buddha's teachings were expounded clearly and succinctly in the First Sermon, Dhammacakka-pavattana-sutta. That first lecture of the Buddha was filled with a sense of renewal as well as discovery. Renewal, because the lecture was able to galvanize his former five friends to have a look at again at their search for solution to human predicaments and strive for an answer.

So, the First Sermon is the blue print of anything that Buddhist wisdom can offer to humanity. Philosophically, it treads the diametrical path known as the middle path, finding out and subsequently abandoning two extremes in human thought, speech and action. Psychologically, it is employs acceptance and profound understanding of human problems, individual or social, as the foundation of any possible transformation.

In this short presentation I would explore the Buddha's 2600th old lecture to find out any contribution that can help transform problem into wisdom. I shall look at the symbols that the Buddha employed in his First Sermon to see the philosophical structure of transformation.

Dhammapada stories, wisdom and human transformation

Dr. Sarah Shaw, UK

One of the most famous quotes of the Buddhist tradition is the first verse of the *Dhammapada*:

'Mind is the forerunner of states. Mind is chief; they are made by mind. If one speaks or acts with unskilful mind, suffering follows one, even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox' (Dhp 1). The *Dhammapada* has proved perhaps the most transportable and deeply respected texts of the tradition, being constantly translated, read and loved, its verses considered as distillations of the wisdom of early Buddhist teaching.[1]

Historically, one of the principal means by which the Buddhist tradition has been communicated in Southern Buddhist regions has been through *Dhammapada* and other commentarial stories, describing comparable moments of insight. The narratives associated with this collection, the *Dhammapada-atthakathā*, are, however, almost unknown outside Southeast and Southern Asia.[2] These often intricate and complex tales have entertained, diverted, taught, and perhaps most importantly, suggest models for meditative and developmental transformation. For this first verse, for instance, there is a long and intricate background story, describing two wealthy brothers, Mahāpāla and Cuḷapāla. One day, as Mahāpāla sees so many people going to listen to the Buddha, he decides to go too. As the story says: 'now when the Buddhas teaches the law, they have regard to the predispositions of the hearers for the

Refuges, the Moral precepts, and Retirement from the world. Thus they always teach the *dhamma* with reference to the disposition of the individual' (DhpA 6). So on that day, seeing Mahāpāla, the Buddha considers his disposition, and teaches accordingly, in a graduated way. His first teaching here follows a pattern frequently found in the *suttas* too: generosity, morality, heaven, the folly of seeking sense pleasures, and the blessings of seclusion.[3] But we get here what we rarely read in *suttas*: an account of the idiosyncratic way the meditator finds his own means of transformation and a path to wisdom. In a painful parallel to his progress on the meditative path, after becoming a monk, Mahāpāla, given a meditation object by the Buddha, becomes ill with eye infections. Despite, or perhaps even because of this pain, his progress is rapid, and he swiftly attains arahatship in the middle of the darkest part of the night, just as his sight is finally lost.[41]After this, kindly treated by other monks, he teaches them the path to arahatship. After many other incidents, the Buddha gives the verse at the end, describing the karma Mahāpāla brought with him from maliciously misusing medical powers when treating an eye patient many lives ago (DhpA I 3-24).

The story makes all sorts of points tangentially about the path to wisdom: and, as so often, the first story of a Buddhist collection encapsulates the themes and style of the whole.[5] For, just as the first verse of the *Dhammapada* articulates the pre-eminence of mental state, central to that collection, this story anticipates the anecdotal, personal journey, through many lifetimes, that animates *Dhammapada* stories. Complex past causes affect the lives of those involved, teaching is geared to the individual, and other features, less quantifiable, highlight essential background features of the path as it is described in the stories: the kindness of the fellow monks who look after the new arahat, for instance, convey a sense of sangha felt so necessary for mutual support and collective life. The 'blindness', that coincides with the losing of the fetters, and the opening of a different kind of vision, anticipates the way attaining path is linked to occasionally surprising, supporting or paradoxical events in the world. Throughout interrelationships between people, events and meditative practice a complete and comprehensive salvific path is described, which the meditator, crucially, finds for him or herself. So, *Dhammapada* stories provide us with a humanized, embodied wisdom: the suitability of dispositions to different objects, the intervention of the teacher at crucial points, and the creative discernment by the individual practitioner attaining liberating wisdom are described in a way that the discourses of the *Nikāyas* do not attempt.

In the *suttas*, the Buddha teaches, guides, gives discourses and undertakes debates with his followers and interested querents. Through these, his teachings are communicated as specific to individuals and situations, and the argumentation and the means by which the Buddha engages his followers is skillfully conveyed. Similes adjust teachings to specific people; arguments are tailored and addressed to each person. The emphasis is, however, on verbal, doctrinal teachings. Features exhibited less markedly in *suttas* are such 'backstories', accounts of the experiential path whereby each individual actually attains to a stage of path, and the means and process whereby intuitive wisdom is integrated through observation of the natural world. So commentarial stories provide an important complement to *suttas*, and show the human struggle in the attaining of wisdom. Let us look at how these features are exhibited, in one or two other stories.

Another *Dhammapada* story demonstrates, through a more pleasant route, appropriate to that individual, the close and careful ways by which the route to liberating wisdom is first taught with the appropriate preparations, extended, and then, importantly, completed, through the creative collaboration between the Buddha, the teacher, and practitioner. A young man is struggling unsuccessfully with meditation. He is asked to recollect 'the foul', by visually considering the sight of a

decomposing corpse. He cannot progress. The Buddha, seeing him with his divine eye, realizes the exercise is doomed to failure, and that his object is unsuitable. He divines that he is now, and was in many past lives, a hereditary goldsmith, and needs a different meditation. So he visits him and conjures a magical vision of a golden-red flower. The young man takes this object, and murmuring the words, 'red, red', soon enters *jhāna*, the meditation described as characterized by initial thinking, discursive examination, joy, happiness and one-pointedness: a peaceful bodily, emotional and mental unification. He attains the next three *jhānas*. His mind, now untroubled by painful feeling and even excessively pleasant feeling, becomes fluid and flexible. It is only at this stage that the Buddha recognizes his preparedness to develop wisdom. He causes the flower, the basis of his meditative attainments, to wither and blacken. The boy, established in calm (*samatha*), gains insight (*vipassanā*) too: he sees the three signs, impermanence (*anicca*), unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), and the lack of a solid and enduring self (*anattā*), understood through the decomposition of this visual object. The Buddha leaves the boy. But now, an important and often overlooked feature of the commentarial tradition's depiction of the route to enlightenment is emphasised. He has to complete the next stage through his own creative interpretation of events that go on around him. Attuned, the young man passes a bank of flowers, some lustrous and fresh, others putrefying. He reaches further insight into these three 'signs'. Finally the teacher returns: he sees the young man is ready for the last stage of insight. Making a magical image of himself, he brushes the boy's cheek. Through the combination of surprise and the aptness of this external event, the boy is filled with devotion, the last necessary step in his own path, and attains arahatship (DhpA III 428–9; story for *Dhammapada*, verse 285).

As so often in early Buddhist narrative, sustained examination of the detail of the tale and the pedagogic process reveals much that theory cannot. Specificity of object to individual, appropriateness of different objects at various stages of development, and variety of method in a graduated path are essential to the meditator's success. The meditator has been given an object that does not suit; he is given another, dovetailing with his predisposition and past experience. When he has achieved results in calm, he is asked to observe the object differently: he sees its defects, in a way that produces insight, rather than frustration, and, through a mixture of his own creative observation, of the bank of dead and live flowers, and the surprise of an odd and apposite step by his teacher inspiring a moment of faith (*saddhā*), achieves awakening. Modern interpretations might vary on features such as 'magical' flowers, visits from a teacher who projects himself to the meditator to give guidance, or the occurrence of 'past lives' that have active influence on present disposition. But whether these features are taken as metaphors, imaginative ways of describing idiosyncrasies of temperament or literal truths, a process of creative collaboration between teacher, pupil and the choice of object is shown, with careful assessment of past and present factors that might influence its success. The individual, in *Dhammapada* stories, is shown to have created his own karma over many lives, an individual inheritance that affects what will work for him or her. This story also demonstrates neatly that there is an appropriate time for advice and intervention, but also, equally crucially, times to hold back. Some objects are shown as suitable at different times and, the realization of an intuitive rather than a mechanical or simply doctrinal wisdom, is shown, requiring spontaneous discernment on the part of the practitioner.

The interplay of character, environments, and distinct, precisely delineated individual paths, in this and other Pāli collections, indicate that in Buddhist practice and theory, no technique or doctrine stands alone. A careful pedagogic method, friendly contact at the right time and a stress on adaptability all emphasise wisdom based on experience and loving kindness. Transformation arises

from internal creativity and observation: in the end, it can never be taught, however much the presence of the teacher, so important in the Southern Buddhist teachings, may be for giving direction and for the final confirmation and validation of any one personal path.

In *Dhammapada* stories meditation objects are carefully chosen, as in the first story, and sometimes, where there a graduated path is different for various people, arise haphazardly in the world around. The stories include many means to finding liberating wisdom: practitioners, often unsuccessful in their initial practice, see bursting rain drops, transforming and changing, that produce liberating insight (DhpA III 165; Dhpv.170), or a forest fire, seen as like the consuming of defilements (DhpA I 280–1, Dhp v.31), or a mirage, exhibiting the illusory and the transient (DhpA I 336; Dhp v.337). In such stories, meditators who find such objects are sometimes given a verse that helps them attain enlightenment, or, spontaneously, articulate their own liberating insight, though it is always supported and validated by the Buddha as well.

In another story, the kind of contradiction beloved by the Chan/Seon/Zen schools is exhibited. A young man is unable to progress in his meditative practice as a monk, which, as we have seen, is a favourite theme, presumably intended to arouse confidence where it may be flagging, as all such meditators in the *Dhammapada* stories do indeed achieve their goal. Just as he has given up and is leaving to go home, the Buddha meets him, giving him a pure white cloth, which he asks him to rub continuously, saying to himself 'purity, purity'. The boy does this, for quite a while. The trouble is, the more he rubs, the more the cloth gets dirty, until it becomes quite filthy. At this point, guided by the Buddha, who teaches him of the impurity of the passions, the young man becomes enlightened. Making magical multiple images of himself all over the monastery, he gives a deep shock to his exemplary brother, who had discouraged him from adhering to the meditative life (DhpA I 239–55, *Dhammapada* verse 25). This friendly tale, presenting the transformation of liberating wisdom as being enabled through an intuitive, apparently contradictory insight, reminds us of Eastern Buddhist liberation stories. Wonhyo, famously, on his way to China from Korea, spent a night in an underground cave, and when thirsty, drank from a vessel he found there:

When I awoke this morning I saw it was not clean water I drank, but putrid rainwater gathered within a human skull, when I drank it, it was truly refreshing, and I slept afterwards in great content. After my discovery this morning, I vomited and felt great discomfort. The water in the morning is no different from last night. When I did not know what it was, I found it refreshing, but when I found out, I felt discomfort. The dirtiness or the cleanliness of an object does not reside in the object itself, but rather depends on the discrimination within our mind. Now therefore, I realize that everything is created by the mind. Because I have realized this truth, I cannot suppress my joy, nor the wish to dance and sing.'[6]

As we have seen, meditation objects, meditation teachers, and aspirant meditators, all need to work together for a successful outcome: the cause (*paccaya*) of strong support (*upanissaya*), is seen manifest in all sorts of ways, through transformatory insight based on running water, mirages, forest fires, or, as in this last story, a puzzling paradox that enables the meditator to rise above the conventional into a different, formulation of the truth. In a modern biography, Mahā Boowa Ñānasampanno writes of Khao Anālayo's path to insight: 'One evening after he swept the ground around his hut, he went off to take a bath. As he was walking along, he saw how the rice growing in the fields was golden yellow and almost ripe. This immediately made him think and question. "The rice has sprouted and grown because there is a seed that has caused it to grow."' Reflecting on

the process of growth from the seeds to the plant, he sees the origin of the *kilesas* in his own heart and ignorance, and, meditating and pacing up and down all night, finally finds liberating wisdom:

'At dawn, just as it was beginning to get light, his wisdom was able to break through to a final conclusion. *Avijjā* [ignorance] then fell away from the *citta* without any remainder. The contemplation of the rice stopped at the point where the rice was ripe never to sprout again…At that point it was clearly evident to him that the *citta* had stopped creating any more births in the various realms of existence….Then the sun began to shine brightly in the sky, while his heart began to get brighter and brighter as it left the realms of *avijjā* and went towards the wonder of Dhamma where it reached *vimutti* – freedom – as the sun rose above the mountains. It was truly a most auspicious and wonderful occasion'.[7]

The taking of natural objects as means of liberating insight is a feature of many modern accounts of the arising of wisdom, at every level, from the modest beginner to the experienced practitioner. In this account, seeds giving rise to plants, and the consonance between the growing light of dawn and the awakening of the practitioner, demonstrate the continuity of modern practice from ancient origins: natural transformation in the outside world elicits and reflects inner change too.

So *Dhammapada* stories have much to offer in modern meditative and educational contexts. They provide a model for pedagogical guidance, a way of personal tailoring of meditation subject to practitioner, and a sense of a graduated, personal path of development geared to individual requirements and needs, all features that could be regarded as great strengths of the Southern Buddhist tradition. Narrative is a particularly helpful means of communicating applicability and personal transformation: inherently specific, and often richly varied, it offers a way of approaching the cultivation of wisdom that, through the intricacies of events, seems to dissolve rigidity of view and fixity of method and practice. Indeed, these seem to require loving kindness and humour for their real appreciation.

Despite this heritage, Buddhist narrative, although closely associated with the limbs (*aṅgas*) of the teaching, has received less attention in modern studies of Buddhism. It is now possible to access most *suttas* on the internet and they are, rightly, often consulted. *Dhammapada* stories, are however, almost unknown, read now only by scholars and those with a special interest. But they are subtly precise in their pedagogy, as well as being straightforwardly entertaining, a reminder of the literal centrality of the factor of joy in the seven factors of awakening, so deeply associated with health of mind and body in the Southern Buddhist traditions. Their embodied wisdom, and their description of a transformation that is both inevitable, in the process of change from one life to another, as well as consciously chosen, in the individual's observation of the natural world and the mind, guided by the teacher and helped by friends, demonstrate the vitality, warmth and practical usefulness of this discursively anecdotal narrative tradition. Historically central to Southern Buddhist lay and monastic education, the stories provide important guidelines on the path to conscious transformation.

Sarah Shaw April 2012

Endnotes

1 The collection has been translated into languages throughout the world. Peter Harvey writes: 'Its popularity is reflected in the many times it has been translated into Western languages'. See *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 322. A recent paperback translation of the *Dhammapada,* for instance, has been produced by Penguin Classics (Valerie Roebuck, *Dhammapada*, London: Penguin, 2010). This helpfully gives shortened versions of the story at the end.

2 For translations, see E.W.Burlingame, *Buddhist Legends* (first published in the Harvard Oriental Series 1921) 3 vols, Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1990. The stories in this paper may be found in vol. 1, 146-58; vol. 3, 161-3 (goldsmith); vol. 1, 325 (forest fire); vol 2, 30 (mirage); vol 3, 4 (mirage and rain bubbles), and vol. 1, 303 (the dirty cloth).

3 See Cousins, L.S. 'Buddhism', in Hinnells, J. ed. *Penguin Handbook of World Religions.*

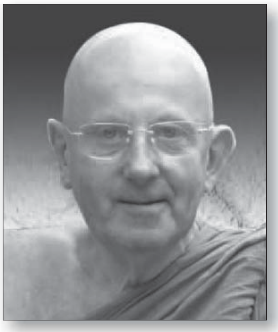
4 On this subject, see S. Shaw, 'Crossing the Wilderness; how the Buddha narrates his own travels',Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies Website (2004). Accessed on 26th April, 2012: http://www.ocbs.org/lectures-a-articles-ocbsmain-121/written-article-layout/46-crossing-the-wilderness-how-the-buddha-narrates-his-own-travels.

5 Jeong Byeong-Jo, *Master Wonhyo, An Overview of his Life and Teachings*, Korean Spirit & Cultural Promotion Project, VI, Seoul: Diamond Sutra Recitation Group, 2010, 23.

6 *Venerable Ajaan Khao Anālayo*, Udon Thani: Forest Dhamma Publications, 2006, 88–89.

Brief Biodata of Contributors

Keynote Speech on The Buddha's Enlightenment for the Well-being of Humanity



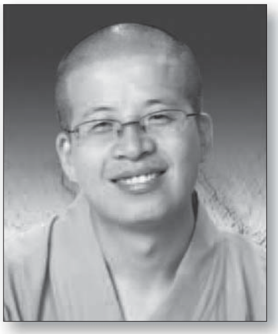
Venerable Phra Bhavanaviteht (Ajahn Khemadhammo) O.B.E.

Email Address : lpkhem@foresthermitage.org.uk

Education : Phra Bhavanaviteht trained as an actor at the Central School of Speech & Drama in London and at Drama Centre, London.

Buddhist Projects/Experiences : Phra Bhavanaviteht is the Abbot of Wat Pah Santidhamma, The Forest Hermitage in Warwickshire. He has been active in prison chaplaincy and the Buddhist chaplain to a number of prisons in England over the past 35 years. He is the Spiritual Director of Angulimala, the Buddhist Prison Chaplaincy Organisation that he and others founded in 1985. He sits on the Prison Service's Chaplaincy Council and is the Buddhist Adviser to H.M. Prison Service and NOMS (the National Offender Management Service). He is also Chairman of TBSUK (Theravada Buddhist Sangha in the UK). He sits on the SACRE (Standing Advisery Council for Religious Education) in both Warwickshire and Coventry and has led Warwick University Buddhist Society for a number of years.

Guest Speaker on Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation



Venerable Dr. Sheng Kai

Ven. Dr. SHENG KAI, studied in Buddhist Academy of China, Nanjing University, attained MPhil (Nanjing University) in 2002, PhD (Nanjing University) in 2005, and finished Postdoctoral study in Tsinghua University in 2007.

He was the Associate professor of Philosophy Department of Nanjing University in 2008. Now, he is the Associate professor of Philosophy Department of Tsinghua University, Executive director of the Buddhist Association of China, the Graduate Teacher of Buddhist Academy of Putuo Mount, Zhejiang Province.

He is the author of following books:

(1.)*The Buddhist Ritual of China*,

(2) *Study on the Confessional Ritual of Chinese Buddhism*,

(3) *The Buddhist Confessional Thought*,

(4) *Study on the School of Mahayana-samuparigraha-sastra*.

He specializes in Buddhist Confession, Buddhist Pure Land Thought, Yogacara Buddism and Tathagatagarbha Buddhism.

Guest Speaker on Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation



Dr. Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya

Education :

B.A. (Hons), M.A. in Mechanical Sciences, Cambridge University, UK Ph.D. in Communications, Imperial College of Science and Technology, U.K. Ph.D. in Education, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.

Past Experiences :

Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Engineering, Chulalongkorn University Deputy Dean of Students Affairs Director of the Institute of Scientific and Technological Research of Thailand Member of Parliament (Elected three times) Secretary to the Foreign Minister

Present :

Chief Administrator of Sathya Sai School Director of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education Visiting Professor on Human Values Education many Universities. Give seminars and training for teachers in many countries around the world.

Special Experience :

Participated in NASA's Viking Space Project in the sub-system design of the automatic landing device.

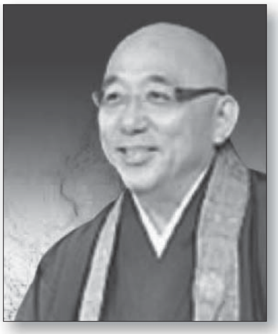
Awards :

Top Scientist of the year 1984 (Best invention that is of benefit for the country)

Publications :

1991 Handbook for Teachers in Education in Human Values 1997
The Five Human Values and Human Excellence 1997
Integration of Human Values in Mathematics and Sciences

Symposium Session 1:
Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation
Speaker



Rev. Noriaki Kunitomo's

Email Address : youmeiin@kyoto.zaq.jp

Current Position : The Head Priest of Youmei-in temple

The Head priest of Tenryu-ji temple first branch

President of World Zen Buddhist Association

Board of Director, Saga Buddhist Party

Rinzai-Zen Missionary monk

Education : March 1977

Guraduate Nihon University College of Art Work in Japan as Personal Manager

September 1979 - May 1981

Academy Art University at Sa Francisco(USA)

September 1981- March 1987

Work in USA as Art Director (Advertising Agency)

April 1987- September 1989

Training Zen Special School in Zuigan-ji Temple

September 1989 -January 2003

2 Company opened in USA also continue the space design and Zen Traning

January 2003 - Now

Design the Zuingan-ji temple (Residential quarter), Dental office, Restaurant etc

The Head priest of Youmei-in temple, Head priest of Tenryu-ji temple first branch , Missionary work at Japan and Nation.

Symposium Session 1:
Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation
Speaker



Professor Vanchai Vatanasapt., M.D., *ONZM.*

POSITION TITLE:

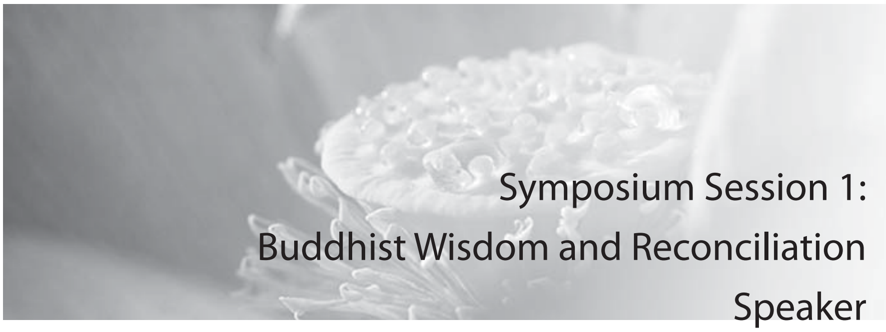
Director of the Courses on Conflict Resolution and Mediation of King Prajadhipok's Institute, Expert Member of the Administrative Committee of the National Research Council of Thailand. Former President of Khon Kaen University.

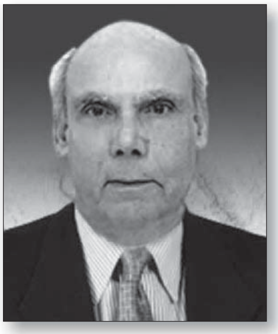
Involved in the Conflict Resolution process and training such as Mediation, Reconciliation and Deliberation in several communities dispute, Environmental and Industry Dispute, University Dispute, Business Dispute, Health care dispute.

Brief Presentation on the Panel Discussion:

The Wisdom of Buddha in the Reconciliation are in many of teaching documents. The important one is the four Noble Truths.

Reconciliation in the Thai Society need more than just complaining but to find the Peaceful way and it must start from "Right View" and "Right Thought".





Professor Kamaleswar Bhattacharya

Email Address : kamaleswar@hotmail.com

Current Position : retired University professor of Sanskrit

Education : Docteur ès Lettres (DLitt)

Buddhist Projects/Experiences : has taught Buddhism and written scholarly books and articles on different aspects of Buddhism

Symposium Session 1:
Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation
Speaker



Dr. Phil Tan

Email Address : ptan@csulb.edu

Education : Phil Tan received his Ph.D. in Social Work from The Ohio State University and has been on faculty at California State University, Long Beach since 2001. He teaches Human Development and Research classes, and a course entitled Spirituality and Social Work Practice.

Buddhist Projects/Experiences : Phil currently leads a book/mediation club for social workers that focuses on readings pertaining to the "Art of Happiness at Work". He is also writing a manuscript on the use of the "Native American Talking Circle" as a resource to listen, learn, and teach about spiritual diversity.

Symposium Session 1:
Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation
Moderator



Venerable Dr. Phra Rajavaramuni (Pol Apakaro)

Education:

Pali IX,

B.A. (Philosophy), Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

B.A. (Education), Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University

M.A. (Linguistics), M.Phil, Ph.D. (Linguistics), University of Delhi, India

Academic Buddhist Works and Experience:

Present:- Dean of the Faculty of Buddhist Studies,

Deputy - The Ecclesiastical Regional Governor, Area 6

Vice Abbot Wat Sangveswitsayaram

Instructor at Faculty of Humanity, Department of Foreign Language

Others:-

Director of Academic Division

Deputy Vice Rector, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Instructor for Religion and Philosophy courses in many institutes

Symposium Session 1: Buddhist Wisdom and Reconciliation Moderator



Venerable Dr. Tampalawela Dhammaratana

Ven. Dr. Tampalawela Dhammaratana, B.A, M.A, M.Phil, Ph.D, was born in Sri Lanka and ordained as a Buddhist monk in 1968. He studied at the Universities of Kelaniya, Paris, and Sorbonne, becoming proficient in Pali, Sanskrit, Sinhalese and French, and received his Ph.D degree from the University of Sorbonne- Paris IV, France in 1994. He also received a title of Doctor Honoris Causa from Mahachulalangkornrajavidyalaya University in 2009. He is a Consultant to the Divisions of Philosophy and Ethics and Cultural Pluralism and Intercultural Dialogue at UNESCO, since 1999. Dr. Dhammaratana is Hon. President of French Buddhist Union, Vice-President of World Fellowship of Buddhists in France, and President of International Council for Buddhist Development in Sri Lanka and President of Buddhist Humanities Action in France. He was the Copy-Editor of History of Humanity Vol. VI-VII published by UNESCO and author of number of scientific research articles on Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism published in English and in French.

Symposium Session 2:
Buddhist Wisdom and Environment
Speaker



Professor Donald K. Swearer

Email Address : dswearer@hds.harvard.edu

Current Position : Distinguished Visiting Fellow Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School

Education : Princeton University, Ph.D., 1967; M.A., 1965; A.B., 1956

Yale University Divinity School, S.T.M., 1963; B.D., 1962

Buddhist Projects/Experiences :

Distinguished Visiting Professor of Buddhism, Harvard Divinity School, 2004-2010

Editorial positions:

Consulting Editor, Buddhist-Christian Studies, 1981-present.

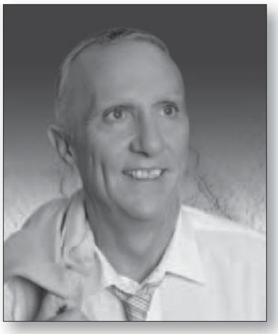
Editorial Board, Curzon Press, Critical Studies in Buddhism, 2000-present

Advisory Board, The Chulalongkorn Journal of Buddhist Studies, 2002-present

Regional Associate Editor, World Fellowship of Buddhists Review, 2003-present

Advisory Board, Journal of the World Buddhist University, 2006-present

Symposium Session 2:
Buddhist Wisdom and Environment
Speaker



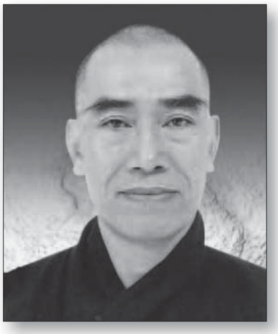
Professor Dr. Damien Keown

Email Address : keown.damien@gmail.com

Education : Damien Keown took a BA degree in Religious Studies at Lancaster University before completing a doctoral thesis at the Oriental Institute, Oxford in 1986.

Buddhist Projects/Experiences : Damien Keown is Emeritus Professor of Buddhist Ethics at Goldsmiths College, University of London, UK. His main research interests are theoretical and applied aspects of Buddhist ethics, with particular reference to contemporary issues. He is the author of many books and articles and in 1994 he founded *The Journal of Budddhist Ethics* with Charles S. Prebish, with whom he also co-founded the *Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism Series*, and co-edited the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Buddhism*.

Symposium Session 2:
Buddhist Wisdom and Environment
Speaker



Venerable Dr. Thich Tam Duc

Email Address : bodhgayavn@yahoo.com.vn

Current Position : A member of The Dharma Executive Council, Vietnam Buddhist Sangha, Vice Rector of Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and Vice Rector & Lecturer of Vietnam Buddhist University in Hochiminh City.

Education : He completed his high school in 1972, B.A. in Buddhist Studies in 1988 and M.A. in History in 1991.

Then in Delhi University, India he completed his M.A. in Buddhist Studies in 1993, Ph. D. in Buddhist Studies in 1997 with the thesis “Thien of Vietnamese Buddhism under the Tran Dynasty”,

Diploma in Pali language in 1998, Diploma in Chinese Language in 1998, and Ph.D. in Philosophy in 2003 with the thesis “Philosophy of the Saddharmapundarika-sutra”.

Buddhist Projects/Experiences : He has attended International Conferences since 2004 in India, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, New Zealand, Australia, and the Philippines.

Especially, he is invited by the United Nations to speak at the UN Headquarters in New York, USA on the occasion of Vesak 2011 on May 16, 2011 with the paper “Conflict and Illusions”.

He published the book “Buddhist Solutions” in Hanoi, 2008. And another book “The Ekayana Philosophy of the Saddharmapundarika-sutra” is being published by him in Delhi, India, this year 2012.

Symposium Session 2:
Buddhist Wisdom and Environment
Speaker



Professor Dr. Chamnong Adivadhanasit

Education : Prof. Dr. Chamnong Adivadhanasit took BA degree in Buddhist Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand before completing MA degrees in English and Social Sciences at Mysore, Madras, India and Ph.D. in Social Sciences at the same place as the MA.

Academic Works : His academic works are about Sociology and Religion and General Sociology Text Books.

Work Experiences : Prof. Dr. Chamnong Adivadhanasit had work experiences as following :

Asst. to the Secretariat of the World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB)

Part time Instructor at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

Part time Instructor at Valaya Alongkorn Rajabhat University (VRU), Pathumthani, Thailand

Present Roles : Presently, Prof. Dr. Chamnong Adivadhanasit has been involving in many roles as following :

Professor at the Faculty of Social Science, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand

Executive Consultant of the Rector in Foreign Affairs, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Wangnoi, Ayutthaya, Thailand

Executive Committee of the Faculty of Social Science, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Wangnoi, Ayutthaya, Thailand

Executive Committee of the Master Degree Curriculum, Surin Campus, Thailand

Executive Committee of the Administration Office, the Office of the Patronage of Buddhism and Social Service, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Wangnoi, Ayutthaya, Thailand

Executive Committee of Singapore University and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Wangnoi, Ayutthaya, Thailand

Executive Committee, M.P.A. (Master Degree of Public Administration) and D.P.A. (Doctorate Degree in Public Adminstration) Programs, Valaya Alongkorn Rajabhat University (VRU), Pathumthani, Thailand

Symposium Session 2:
Buddhist Wisdom and Environment
Moderator



Professor Dr. Le Mahn That

Professor Le Manh That (Most Ven. Thich Tri Sieu) is not only an extraordinary Buddhist scholar, but a national and international hero as well. His courage is an inspiration to the Vietnamese people and the Human Rights Community worldwide.Born in 1944 in Quang Tri provine, Ven. Le Manh That ordained at the age of twelve.He received his BA in Philosophy and Pedagogy from the University of Saigon in 1965 and his PhD from the University of Wisconsin in 1974 for his research on Vasubandhu.He thereafter lectured and pursued research at the Van Hanh University and the Van Hanh Buddhist Research institute in the fields of Indic languages and philosophy and the history of Vietnamese Buddhism.

Symposium Session 2:
Buddhist Wisdom and Environment
Moderator



Associate Professor Dr. Pataraporn Sirikanchana

Associate Professor Pataraporn Sirikanchana is long - time professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Thammasart University, Bangkok, Thailand. Having received the Harvard - Yenching scholarship and graduated with a Ph.D. Degree in Religious Studies from the University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A., she has written many articles and books in both Thai and English, including an academic contribution to Religions of the World : A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices, published in U.S.A. . She is also a prize-winner of the Chamnong Tongprasert Foundation award for the Best Contribution of Work in Philosophy in B.E. 2552/2009. At present, in addition to being a professor at Thammasat University, she is an Associate Fellow of the Royal Institute of Thailand, Vice-Rector of the World Buddhist University and is a member of many academic committees at Thammasat Univesity and other academic institutions.

Symposium Session 3:
Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation
Speaker



Venerable Prof. Dr. Yuan Ci

Email Address : padumaci@gmail.com

Current Position : Research Fellow, Member of the Standing Committee of the Buddhist Association of China

Vice-Rector, Lingyanshan Buddhist College, China

Dharma Master, the Buddhist Association of China,

Member of Buddhist research Fellow at the Institute For Buddhist Cultural Studies of China

Education : SOAS, the University of London, UK

PhD Program; Awarded Doctor Degree in Philosophy.

Buddhist Projects/Experiences : *The Bodhisattva Ideal In Selected Buddhist Scriptures*, Religious Publish House, Beijing , 2010

The Concept of the Buddha in Theravada and Mahayana, *Buddhist Studies*, Journal of the Research Institute of Buddhist Culture of Chian, 2007

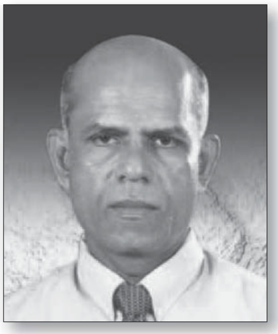
A Study on Bukong's Verson of Sanskrit **prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya sūtraṁ** on the Liao Buddha's Pagoda, *Buddhist Studies*, Journal of the Research Institute of Buddhist Culture of Chian, 2008

A Study on the Parāmitās and the Bodhisattva, *Buddhist Studies*, Journal of the Research Institute of Buddhist Culture of Chian, 2009

A Study on Venerable Fa-xian 's Contributions to Buddhism, *Buddhist Studies*, Journal of the Research Institute of Buddhist Culture of Chian, 2010

A Study on the Methods of medition in the Chinese Texts, *Buddhist Studes*, Journal of the National Buddhist Academy of China, 2011

Symposium Session 3:
Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation
Speaker



Senior Professor Sumanapala Galmangoda

Email Address : galman@sltnet.lk

Current Position : Senior Professor, Director, Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Education : BA (Hons.), MA, PhD., Royal Pandit

Buddhist Projects/Experiences : 3 Year Experience of conducting Buddhist Ayurvedic Counseling programme in Sri Lanka with the assistance of World Health Organization South East Asia Centre, 25 years experience of teaching Pali, Sanskrit, Buddhist Philosophy, Buddhist Culture, Buddhist Psychology in University level, 20 years experience as a supervisor in Buddhist studies leading to the degrees MA, MPhil and PhD, 3 year experience as the Head of the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, 1 year experience as an acting director of the Ayurvedic Institute of the University of Kelaniya, 5 year experience as the director of the postgraduate institute of Pali and Buddhist studies, University of Kelaniya.

Symposium Session 3:
Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation
Speaker



Venerable Dr. Khammai Dhammasami, DPhil (Oxford)

Venerable Dhammasami graduated with a doctorate from Oxford and now holds the posts of (a) Executive Secretary of the International Association of Buddhist Universities (IABU) and (b) the Association of Theravada Buddhist Universities (ATBU), (3) Fellow and Trustee of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, University of Oxford and (4) professor at ITBM University, Myanmar. He authors among others Mindfulness Meditation Made Easy (reprinted five times & translated into Thai and Korean); his research interest is sangha education and the Pali suttas."

Symposium Session 3:
Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation
Speaker



Dr. Sarah Shaw

Email Address : sarah.shaw@orinst.ox.ac.uk

Current Position : Member of Oriental Institute and Wolfson College, Oxford University, Honorary Fellow Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, lecturer Oxford University Department for Continuing Education.

Education : Manchester University. BA Hons Greek and English Literature, 1976; PhD English Literature, 1983.

Buddhist Projects/Experiences :

Lecturer, author and writer on Buddhist subjects. Books include *Buddhist Meditation: an Anthology of Text* (Routledge 2006), *Jātakas: Birth Stories of the Bodhisatta* (Penguin Classic Series, Delhi, 2006) and *Introduction to Buddhist Meditation* (Routledge 2009).

Symposium Session 3:
Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation
Moderator



Associate Professor Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat

Dean of Graduate School

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU)

Education : Asst. Prof. Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat graduated in Buddhist Theology at the highest level (Pali 9) in 1987; got MA (Pali & Sanskrit) in 1991, and Ph.D. (Pali) in 1998; both degrees from Puna, India.

Academic Buddhist Works and Experiences :

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat has been in the Management team of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU) since 1997 in the positions as follows :

1997 : Management Staff of Academic Affairs

1998 : Director of Academic Affairs

1999 : Instructor of Buddhist Studies and Acting Deputy Dean of MCU Graduate School

2001 : Deputy Dean of MCU Graduate School

2002-2010 : Dean of the Faculty of Buddhist Studies

December 1, 2010-Present : Dean of MCU Graduate School

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phra Suthithammanuwat participated in various international academic seminars; i.e. - moderating the panels on 'Global Recovery Through Buddhist' in the 7th United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations Held in Thailand during May 23-25, 2010 and 'Wisdom on Awakening Society' in the 8th United Nations Day of Vesak Celebrations Held also in Thailand the following year during May 12-14, 2011, both at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), Main Campus, Wangnoi, Ayutthaya, Thailand. – Commenting on the article 'Characteristics of Buddhist Tradition and Transformation in Korea' written by Prof. Ven. Jin-Wol in the Seminar Theme "Buddhist Culture Exchange and Cooperation between Korea and Thailand" as the participation in the 1st Korea-Thailand Buddhist Culture Forum 2010 during March 31-April 2, 2010 at Gyeongju Hilton Hotel, etc.

Symposium Session 3:
Buddhist Wisdom and Human Transformation
Moderator



Bhante Chao Chu

Bhante Chao Chu is the President of the Los Angelis Buddhist Union (LABU) in the US. Born in Sri Lanka, he ordained to the Buddhist monastic order in 1964, graduating from the Buddhist College in 1970. He studied in Hong Kong and at the University of Nan Jing, China. He gives lectures in Chinese and English as a teacher of Buddhism and social issues.

Since coming to the US. in 1981, he has been involved in numerous interfaith and inter-Buddhist activities in Los Angeles that include leadership roles such as President of the Center for Buddhist Development, Executive Committee Member of the World Fellowship of Buddhists and the World Buddhist Sangha Council and Vice President of the Buddhist Sangha Council of Souththern California. He is also an advisor of the International Association of Buddhist Universities. Bhante Chao Chu has received a BA in Philosophy from California State University of Los Angeles and an MA in Buddhist studies from the University of Kelaniya. He also founded the Bosath Children's Education Foundation to help underprivileged children by providing them free education in computer and English.

Main Co-ordinator : Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

: International Council for Day of Vesak (ICDV)

Sponsored by : The Royal Government of Thailand